
GORTZ OF BERLINGEN.



GORTZ
OF
BERLINGEN,

WITH
THE IRON HAND.

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA,
Of the Fifteenth Century.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

GOETHE,

THE AUTHOR OF *WERTHER.*

While Genius shall with Nature vie,
While Youth to Beauty pours the sigh,
While Pity from the melting eye,
 Shall claim regard—
So long thy name shall never die,
 Immortal Bard!

ROSCOE ON BURNS.

LIVERPOOL,

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PREFACE.

IN presenting a translation of Gortz of Berlingen (Goetz von Berlichingen) to the public, it will be proper to say a few words on the character and design of the author, and on the state of society and manners in Germany during the 15th century, where the scene of the drama is laid.

The author, the celebrated Goethe, is known throughout Europe by various literary publications, particularly by his *Sorrows of Werter*; a work beautiful in its separate pictures, though in its general tendency unfavourable to virtue and happiness, and which but for this fatal objection, might have ranked with the most successful efforts of modern genius. The play now offered to the public in an English dress is a production of a very different nature, and may be considered as affording a proof of the great versatility of the author's powers. The principal character is a feudal Baron, living in the reign of the Emperor Maximilian, (grandfather and immediate predecessor to Charles Vth.) nursed amidst the storms and tempests of that turbulent period, brave, generous, and sincere,

A

possessing

possessing qualities suited to a disordered state of society, and which such a state of society is fitted to strengthen and unfold. Of this troubled condition of Germany during the period already mentioned, it seems, indeed, to have been the principal design of Goethe to give an animated representation, and for this purpose he has written this historical drama after the manner of Shakespeare, of whom he is well known to be an enthusiastic admirer. Like the historical plays of our great Bard, it includes a period, and contains a history of several years; hence the scene is perpetually shifting even in the same act; and thus are violated with the utmost disregard, and even wantonness, all the unities of time and place. Like Shakespeare our author exhibits a great variety of characters, from the throne to the cottage, and often introduces individuals that serve less to advance the plot of a regular drama, than to relate the incidents or illustrate the manners of the age. Like him also, he passes by rapid transition, not only over distance of place, but from one train of sentiment, to another that is opposite; his principal characters are exhibited in almost every variety of situation, from the most calm and peaceful, to the most tumultuous and terrible; and every where is displayed, not merely the power, but the prodigality of genius. It is to be feared indeed that the reader will discover this but faintly in this translation; in the German of Goethe however it is assuredly to be found. He whose taste is formed on the laws of the Greek or the French stage will scarcely tolerate the irregularities of Gortz of
Berlingen :

Berlingen : the disciples of Shakespeare and nature will give him welcome, and dismiss him with applause.

But to illustrate the manners exhibited in the following drama, it may be useful to enter into a few particulars respecting the state of Germany at the period to which it refers. During a long season of turbulence and confusion, the constitution of that great empire had undergone an almost entire change. The princes, the great nobility, the dignified ecclesiastics, the free cities, had established their usurpations on the ruins of the Imperial authority, and exercised them to the utter depression of the great body of the people, the cultivators of the soil. The principles of order and political union which had formed the various provinces of Germany into one body, were nearly lost; and the society must have dissolved, had not some appearance of dependance on the Emperor been preserved by the forms of feudal subordination.* Among the other rights of sovereignty exercised by the individual members of the Germanic body, was the right (if we may so express it) of private wars. And as the causes of dissension among that vast number of members were various and unavoidable, private wars arose perpetually, and were carried on with all the violence of resentment, unrestrained by superior authority. Commerce was interrupted, industry suspended, and rapine, outrage,

* Robertson's View of the State of Europe, p. 213.

rage, and exactions, became universal. This state of disorder was aggravated during the period of which we speak, by the imperfect light scattered over Germany from the free cities. The peasantry began to hear the accents of freedom, to see, as well as to feel their oppressions; and assuming to themselves the redress of their own grievances, they rose in dreadful insurrection, and carried every where murder and desolation.

The grievances of such a state of society became intolerable, and various confederacies were formed among the different princes and nobles, for the maintenance of order, which as they acquired power, in their turns exercised oppression. The inferior nobles naturally adhered to one or other of these confederacies, to which they lent their support, and by which they were protected. In like manner the cities united in a league, the object of which was to check the extortions of the nobles; and every party was willing to obtain the sanction of the Emperor to their proceedings, though refusing to submit to his arbitration. These measures were altogether ineffectual in securing the peace of the Empire; but in 1495 (a few years after the date assigned to this drama) Maximilian succeeded in establishing the Imperial Chamber, vested with authority to decide all the differences among the members of the Germanic body, when the right of private wars was abolished.

In the previous state of disorder and confusion, some of the inferior nobles, of generous spirits, and fearless

fearless tempers, attempted to support their independence against the confederacies of the greater nobles or princes, and courted the protection of the Emperor, whose authority they sought to strengthen. At the head of a band of this kind was Gortz of Berlingen, the most celebrated and generous warrior of his day. Merciful to the peasantry, kind and bountiful to his adherents, terrible to his foes, he enjoyed in secret the favour of Maximilian; but at length fell a sacrifice to the intrigues of his enemies, and to that restlessness of temper, engendered in him by the spirit of the times.

This play was published in Germany about the year 1771. The author therefore could not in writing it, have any reference to the melancholy crisis in which Europe is at present involved. To prevent however any improper application, a few sentences are softened or expunged.

March 20, 1799.

feeling, and attempted to support their independence against the condescension of the great nobles of the land, and contrasted the protection of the Emperor with the authority they sought to strengthen. At the head of a band of this kind was Cortez of Castile, the most celebrated and generous warrior of our days, devoted to the poor, kind, and generous to his adherents, sensitive to his foes; he engaged in the fight the banner of Maximilian; but at length fell a victim to the intrigues of his enemies, and to the selfishness of his own ambition, and in this by the spirit of the times.

This play was published in Germany about the year 1791. The author, however, could not be said to have any reference to the melancholy state in which it is at present situated. To present, however, any proper application, a few sentences are prefixed or appended.

London 1792.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

**THE EMPEROR, MAXIMILIAN.
GORTZ OF BERLINGEN.**

CHARLES, his infant son.

GEORGE, his page.

FRANCIS of Sickingen.

HANS of Selbitz.

BISHOP of Bamberg.

ADELBERT of Falkenhelm,

FREDERIC, his page,

VERITAS,

ABBOT of Fulda,

OLEARIUS, Doctor of Laws.

BROTHER MARTIN, a Monk.

FRANCIS LERSEN, a Soldier.

JUDGES of the Secret Tribunal.

IMPERIAL COUNSELLORS.

MAGISTRATES of Heilbronn.

CITIZENS of Heilbronn.

GENERAL, KNIGHTS and SOLDIERS of the Army of the Empire.

TWO TRADESMEN of Nuremberg.

MIESNER,

SIEVERS,

LINK,

COLE,

WILD,

MARK STURT, a Vassal of the Palatinate.

A STRANGER.

BRIDEGROOM.

AN OLD PEASANT, Father of the Bride.

**SOLDIERS and VASSALS belonging to the different Parties of Ber-
lingen, Falkenhelm, and Bamberg.**

LANDLORD.

MESSENGER.

GUARD.

JAILOR.

} Of the Bishop's Court.

} Leaders of the rebellious Peasantry.

PEASANTS.

PEASANTS.

CAPTAIN of the Gypsies.

SCHRICKS, } Gypsies.
WOLF, &c. }

ADELAIDE of Walldorf.

ELIZABETH, Wife of Gortz.

MARIA, his Sister.

MARGARET, an Attendant on Adelaide.

PEASANTS.

GYPSES.

Note. The name of *Falkenbelm*, which will be familiar to those who are well read in the German Romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, has been substituted for that of *Weislingen*, as more easy to English pronunciation.—The Translator has also ventured to change the appellation of *Francis* for that of *Frederic*, to avoid the confusion which three characters of the same name might have occasioned the reader.

GORTZ.

GORTZ OF BERLINGEN.

ACT I.

SCENE, Schwartzenberg, in Franconia. An Inn.

MEISNER and SIEVERS at a table—Two SOLDIERS
by the fire—LANDLORD.

Sievers. (To the landlord) COME, one glass
more, Hans!

Landlord. Why, you have never enough.

Meisner. (Aside to Sievers) Tell us again that story
about Berlingen, it will vex those Bambergers: they
will be ready to burst with envy.

Sievers. Bambergers! What are they doing here?

Meisner. They escorted Adelbert of Falkenheim
up to the castle, where he has been for these two days
past, and I suppose they're waiting to attend him back
to Bamberg.

Sievers. Who is this Falkenheim?

Meisner. The bishop's right-hand, a powerful noble-
man,

B

man, and one who would fain do our Gortz a service. (*ironically.*)

Sievers. He had better take care of himself.

Meisner. (*In a low voice to Sievers*) That will do ! (*aloud*) How long has Gortz been again at enmity with the bishop of Bamberg ? I thought all had been made up between them.

Sievers. Yes, I like your making up with priests ; as soon as the bishop saw that there was nothing to be gained by the contest, and that he had ever the worst of it, he betook himself to his canting, and endeavoured to adjust matters, and the noble spirited Berlingen gave up to him in every thing, as is ever his custom when he perceives he has the advantage.

Meisner. God preserve him, he is a most excellent knight.

Sievers. Only think now, is it not shameful ? At the very moment when he least expected it, they have seized and imprisoned one of his followers ; but they'll smart for it.

Meisner. 'Twas a pity that his last expedition did not succeed ; he must have been sorely disappointed at its failure.

Sievers. Such things do not mortify him long ; but is it not surprising ? since he had made himself master of every particular ; as the time the bishop was to return from bathing, the number of his attendants, and the road he was to take ; and if he had not been betrayed, he would have turned the bath into holy water by putting the bishop into it, and have given him a good dry rubbing into the bargain.

1st Soldier. What have you to say about our bishop ? it's my belief you want to quarrel.

Sievers. Mind your own business. What have you to do with our table ?

2d Soldier. What do you mean by speaking disrespectfully of our bishop ?

Sievers. Am I bound to answer your impertinent questions ?

1st Soldier. (*Strikes him.*)

Meisner.

Meisner. Knock the villain down.

2d Soldier. Come on, if you dare. (*They fall upon one another*)

Landlord. (*Divides them*) Can't you keep the peace here? Zounds! if you *must* quarrel, turn out and fight it fairly. My house shall not be disturbed by your broils, (*turns the soldiers out*) and (*to the others*) you ye blockheads, what would you be at?

Meisner. Fair words, Hans, or your head may suffer. Come comrade let's go and give those fellows a drubbing.

Enter two Soldiers of Berlingen's party.

1st Soldier. What is the matter here?

Sievers. Good day Peter—Veit, how fares it?

2d Soldier. Hush! friend, do not betray to whom we belong.

Sievers. (*Softly*) What, is your master Gortz in the neighbourhood?

1st Soldier. Hold your tongue, I say—have you had a dispute here?

Sievers. Yes. You must have met the rascals without; they are Bambergers.

1st Soldier. Bambergers! What do they do here?

Meisner. Why Falkenheim is up at the castle on a visit to the Count, and they escorted him.

1st Soldier. Falkenheim!

3d Soldier. (*Whispering his companion*) Peter! dost thou mark that? (*To Meisner*) How long has he been there?

Meisner. Two days already; but he will go away to-day as I heard one of those fellows say.

1st Soldier. (*Softly to his companion*) Did I not tell thee he was there? if we had only waited a little—come Veit.

Sievers. Lend us a hand first to thrash these Bambergers.

2d Soldier. You are two already. We are obliged to go. Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

Sievers.

Sievers. The devil take these soldiers, they'll not strike a stroke unless they are paid for it.

Meisner. I will be sworn they have some scheme in hand. Whom do they serve?

Sievers. Why I should not say, but it is Gortz of Berlingen.

Meisner. Well! let us see after those fellows; as long as I have a cudgel, I care not a fig for their cheese toasters. [*Exeunt.*]

An Inn in a Wood.

GORTZ before the door among the trees.

Gortz. Where can my people linger! I must keep on foot, or sleep will overpower me. Five days and nights already on the watch. With what labour do we defend this little span of life and liberty! For this when once I have thee, Adelbert! I will taste rest again. (*Filling his glass*) Again empty! (*Setting down the flask.*) George! (*calling.*) As long as neither *this* nor courage fail, I laugh at the ambition and the rancour of princes. George! (*calling.*) Are ye sending now your plausible Falkenheim round to form cabals and to calumniate me? Do your worst. I stand prepared. Thou hast escaped me, bishop, so shall thy favored Adelbert discharge the heavy reckoning! Why George! (*calling*) is the boy deaf? George! (*calling*)

Enter George with a man's armour awkwardly put on.

George My Lord!

Gortz. Where are you? Have you been asleep? What mummery is this. (*looking at his armour.*) Let's look at you. You're a good figure. Nay, be not abash'd, boy. Thou'rt a brave lad. If thou could'st fill it now! What, is this Hans's cuirass?

George. He lay down to sleep and unbuckled it.

Gortz.

Gortz. He considers his ease more than his master does.

George. Be not angry. I stole it softly away to try it on, and fetching my father's old sword down from the wall, I ran into the field yonder to exercise myself a little.

Gortz. And have been cutting and thrusting I suppose among the thorns and thistles. Is Hans asleep still?

George. He sprang up at your voice, and sent me to you; I wanted to have got the armour off; but I heard you a second and a third time.

Gortz. Well, carry back his arms, and tell him to be ready and to look after the horses.

George. I have fed them plentifully already, and put on their bits again: You may mount when you will.

Gortz. Bring me some wine; and give Hans a draught, and bid him be alert, the times require it. I expect every instant the return of my scouts.

George. (*In a tone of supplication.*) Ah! my dear Lord!—

Gortz. What wouldst thou?

George. May not I go with you?

Gortz. Not now, another time.

George. Another time! another time! That's what you always say. Oh! this time! this time! I will only run by the side of your horse, only watch by you during the battle. I'll fetch you back the arrows you have shot away.

Gortz. The next time, George. You must have a cuirass and a visor.

George. Pray let me go! If I had been with you last time you never would have lost your cross-bow.

Gortz. Why what dost thou know about that?

George. You threw it at the head of an enemy, and one of the foot-soldiers seized it and carried it off. You see I know.

Gortz. Do my soldiers tell thee all this?

George. Yes; and in return I whistle for them, and teach

teach them merry songs, while we are rubbing down the horses together.

Gortz. Thou'rt a brave boy !

George. Take me with you that I may prove it.

Gortz. The next time, I will, upon my word. But unarmed as thou art, I would not suffer thee to enter the battle, the times to come will need soldiers. I tell thee, boy ! the days are fast approaching, when princes will offer treasures for the man they now detest. Go, George, give Hans his cuirass, and bring me wine. [*Exit George.*] What can detain my people ! Their delay is unaccountable. A monk ! what brings him here at this time ?

Enter Brother Martin.

Gortz. Holy father ! Good evening. Whither so late ? Man of peace, thy activity might put knights to the blush.

Martin. I thank you, my noble Lord. But I have no claim to the high title you give me. I am only a humble brother of my order. I am known by the name of Augustine in my cloister, but I hear with most pleasure, my Christian name of Martin.

Gortz. You are wearied, brother Martin, and without doubt thirsty. [*Enter George with wine.*] This wine comes opportunely.

Martin. A draught of water for me. I dare not drink wine.

Gortz. Is it against your vow ?

Martin. No, my Lord ; it is not to infringe my vow to taste of wine, but because the drinking of wine makes against my vow, I touch it not.

Gortz. How do you explain that ?

Martin. How happy for you, who do not understand it !

Enter George with water.

Gortz. (*To George in a low voice.*) Go to the road that leads from Dachsbach ; lay thine ear to the ground, and as soon as thou hear'st the sound of horses' feet, return

return like light'ning to acquaint me. *[Exit George.]*
Why do you look upon me with so much earnestness, brother?

Martin. I was admiring your armour.

Gortz. Do you covet such a suit? It is irksome and heavy to bear.

Martin. What is not irksome and heavy in this world? and what burden can be more oppressive, what yoke more galling than the one I bear? Poverty, chastity, and obedience! Three vows, each of which singly considered appears insupportable to humanity, What then must be the pressure of their accumulated weight? Oh! my Lord! can the indolent tranquillity of our lives compensate for the pleasures, for the privileges which such vows deprive us of?

Gortz. Were not your vows so sacred, I would persuade you to abandon your cowl for a helmet; would offer you a horse, and invite you to become the companion of my expeditions *(Gortz rises, and goes to the side of the stage, to see if George is returning.)*

Martin. Would to heaven my body possessed strength to support the buckler; my arm vigour to unhorse a foe! miserable nerveless hand! accustomed only to bear the cross, display the ensigns of peace, or swing the smoking censer. How couldst thou poise the lance, or wield the sword. My voice attuned only to Aves and Hallelujahs, would be to my adversaries the herald of my weakness; while yours possesses power to daunt and dismay your foe! No exertion of my own could prevent me from sinking again into that situation in society, for which my creator, when he formed me, ordained me.

(Gortz during this speech has appeared uneasy and restless, looking anxiously for George's return.)

Gortz. *(Drinking)* Here's to your safe arrival at home.

Martin. I might drink that with more propriety to you. To me, the return to my confinement is only the renewal of misery. But when you return to your castle with a conviction of your power, and of your strength;

strength; when you, for the first time after long fatigue, secure from hostile attacks, disarm and stretch yourself in peace upon your couch, and yield up your senses to that repose, which to you feels sweeter after long turmoil, than to me the draught that cools my burning thirst, then, indeed, may you talk of happiness.

Gortz. Such pleasure is not often allowed me.

Martin. (*With the bigbest enthusiasm*) But is, when it arrives, a fore-taste of heaven! When you return laden with the spoils of your enemies, and pointing to the different suits of armour, recollect, "The owner of this, I dragged from his horse as he was taking aim at me; and he who bore that, I tumbled with his steed to the earth." when you ride up the court-yard, and your friends come out with rapture to receive you; when your wife—(*filling his glass*) To the health of your wife! (*wiping his eyes*) you are married?

Gortz. To a noble excellent woman!

Martin. Happy he who possesses a virtuous woman! I have no wife, and yet woman was the crown of the creation.

Gortz. (*Aside*) I pity him; the sense of his situation seems so heavily to oppress him.

Enter George, running.

George. My Lord! My Lord! I hear the galloping of horses! 'Tis they certainly.

Gortz. Lead out my horse. Tell Hans to mount. Farewell, dear brother! Peace be with you! Be cheerful and patient, God will comfort you.

Martin. I entreat your name.

Gortz. Excuse me, and farewell! (*he offers him his left hand*)

Martin. Why do you give me your left hand? Am I unworthy of the warlike right.

Gortz. And if you were the emperor, you must accept this from me. My right, though not useless in war, is insensible to the pressure of affection: it is one with my gauntlet: See! it is of Iron

Martin. You are then Gortz of Berlingen! I thank God,

God, that he has permitted me to see this man!—this terror of the wicked, this safeguard of the just! Let me kiss this hand, (*taking his right hand.*)

Gortz. You shall not.

Martin. Oh! let me! Thou! more precious than holy reliques thro' which the most sacred blood has flowed, senseless instrument, enlivened by the firmest confidence in God!

Gortz puts on his helmet and takes his lance.

Martin continues.

I remember well, a monk visited us about a year ago, who attended you when it was shot off, in the action before Landshuten: I remember how he related to us your sufferings; and your fears, lest the loss of it should prove injurious to you in the exercise of your darling profession of arms. How he described your joy at recollecting the example of a foldier, who, though he had lost an arm, yet had afterwards distinguished himself as a most brave and active knight. I shall never forget it.

Two Soldiers enter.

Gortz goes towards them; they converse privately.

Martin continuing in the mean time.

I shall never forget, with what sincere and pious confidence in God he repeated the Text; "Had I twelve hands, and were thy grace not with me, what would they avail? but possessing it, with one alone—"

Gortz. (*To the Soldiers*) In the Haslach wood then, (*turning hastily to Martin*) Farewell, worthy brother. (*embraces him.*)

Martin. Forget me not! I can never forget thee! [*Exit Gortz.*] How my heart throbbed with emotion while I but looked on him! he spoke not; but my spirit could distinguish his. There is a luxury in contemplating a truly great man.

George. Reverend Father! will you pass the night here?

Martin. Can I have a bed?

George.

George. No Father. I know of beds only by hear-say: but there is plenty of straw in our quarters.

Martin. Very well. What is your name?

George. George, Reverend Father.

Martin. George! your saint is a brave patron.

George. They say he was a knight, and so I mean to be.

Martin. (*Taking out a breviary*) Hold! there he is, follow his example, be brave, and fear God. [*Exit*]

George. (*Alone.*) (*looking at the picture of Saint George.*) Ah! what a beautiful gray! if I had but such one! And the fine golden armour! That's a frightful dragon! Well! (*sighing*) I'll go and shoot sparrows. Holy George! make me but tall and strong! give me but such a lance, helmet and horse, and then let the dragon come if he will. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *Yartbausen, Gortz's Castle.*

Elizabeth, Maria, seated at work, Charles.

Charles. Pray, good aunt, tell me again that story about the good child. It was so pretty!

Maria. Tell it me, you little rogue, and then I shall see if you have attended to me.

Charles. Stay a little.—Let me consider.—“There was once”—Yes, “There was once a little boy, and his mother was very sick; and so—and so he went to his mother—

Maria. No!—“Then said his mother to him, my dear child—

Charles. “I am very sick—

Maria. “And cannot go out.

Charles. “And she gave him some money, and said go and buy a cake for your breakfast;—and there—and there came a poor man—

Maria. No! “The child went, and met an old man who was”—Now, Charles! “Who was—

Charles;

Charles. "Who was . . . old—

Maria. To be sure; "Who could scarcely walk,
"and said, my good child—

Charles. "Give me something, for I have not tasted
"bread these two days. And the little boy gave him
"his money—

Maria. "That was meant to buy him a breakfast:

Charles. "Then the old man said—

Maria. "Then the old man took the child—

Charles. Oh! "By the hand, and said—(for he
was a holy man) "and said, dear child—

Maria. "The Mother of God will reward you for
"your charity. Whatever sick person you shall touch—

Charles. "With your hand" It was the right hand,
was it not?

Maria. Yes.

Charles. "Shall be immediately healed."

Maria. "Then the little boy ran home, and could
"scarce speak for joy;

Charles. "And fell upon his mother's neck, and
"wept for joy.

Maria. "And his mother cried out, What change
"is this which I feel! And was—" Now, Charles!

Charles. "And was—and was—"

Maria. You do not attend, child. "And was made
"well from that very hour. And the little boy healed
"both kings and emperors, and became so rich that he
"built a monastery."

Elizabetb. I can not conceive what detains my husband. He has now been absent five days, and he expected to have accomplished his design almost immediately.

Maria. I have been long uneasy. If I were to marry a man who should expose himself to such continual dangers, I should die with anxiety within the first year.

Elizabetb. I thank God that he has endowed me with more fortitude.

Charles. But is my father obliged to ride out, if it is so dangerous?

Maria.

Maria. It is his pleasure.

Elizabeth. To be sure he must, my love.

Charles. What for?

Elizabeth. Don't you remember, the last time he brought you home some nuts?

Charles. Will he bring me any this time, do you think?

Elizabeth. I dare say he will. Listen! There was once a taylor at Stutgard, who was an excellent bowman, and won the prize at Cologne.

Charles. Was it much?

Elizabeth. A hundred crowns, and afterwards they refused to pay it to him.

Maria. Was not that shameful, Charles.

Charles. Good-for-nothing people!

Elizabeth. And the poor taylor came in great distress to your father, and entreated him to assist him in getting his money; and your father fallied out, and seized two merchants belonging to Cologne, and kept them in prison till the magistrates had paid the poor man the money. Would not you have gone too, on such an occasion

Charles. No, for one must then pass through that thick dark wood, where the gypsies and witches live

Elizabeth. You are a brave fellow indeed, to be afraid of gypsies and witches.

Maria. You will do better, Charles; live quietly at your own castle, like a good Christian Knight. Upon one's own estate there are always opportunities enough of being useful. The bravest Knights do often more harm than good in their expeditions.

Elizabeth. Sister, you know not what you speak. God grant that my boy may become a brave man like his father; and never may he follow the example of Falkenheim, who acts so faithlessly towards my husband

Maria. We will not decide in this case, Elizabeth. My brother is much exasperated, and you have imbibed a portion of his resentment. But I have been a mere spectator in the whole affair, and can judge with more impartiality.

Elizabeth. His conduct is not to be defended.

Maria.

Maria. What I have heard of him has impressed me in his favour—how many traits of courage and generosity has your husband himself repeated to us of him? In what harmony and affection did they live together in their youth, when they were both Pages of Honor to his Highness the Margrave.

Elizabeth. That may be: but tell me, can the man possess generosity of spirit who betrays his best friend, who sells his services to his enemies, and who endeavors, by the falsest representations, to injure him with the good Emperor, at present so favorably inclined towards him?

Charles. (*Running in.*) My father! My father! the horn sounds from the watch-tower. Hola! hola! Throw open the gates there!

Elizabeth. Ah! he returns victorious!

Enter a Soldier.

Soldier. We have had a tedious chase, but at last we have brought home noble game. God keep you gracious ladies.

Elizabeth. Falkenheim is then in your power?

Soldier. He, and three of his attendants.

Elizabeth. How happened it you were so long away?

Soldier. We lay in ambush for him between Nuremberg and Bamberg. He did not appear, and yet we were certain he must be on the way; at last we got intelligence that he had taken a bye road, and had arrived undiscovered at the count of Schwartzenburg's.

Elizabeth. Schwartzenburg! Do they want to excite him also to enmity against my husband.

Soldier. I told my master that was their intention, the moment I heard that Falkenheim was on a visit there. Well, away we gallop'd to the Haslach wood, and at length met Falkenheim attended only by four servants.

Maria. My heart trembles with apprehension.

Soldier. I and my comrade, as my master had commanded

commanded us, fastened upon Falkenheim as if we would have grown to him, and completely prevented him stirring or freeing himself; in the mean time my Lord and Hans took care of his attendants; but one of them has escaped us.

Elizabeth. I am curious to see this Falkenheim; will they be here immediately?

Soldier. I left them in the valley, in a quarter of an hour they must arrive.

Maria. He will be sadly dejected.

Soldier. Yes, he looks gloomy enough.

Maria. The sight of him in such circumstances will pain me to the heart.

Elizabeth. Well, I will go and prepare dinner, you will all have good appetites I suppose.

Soldier. We are all hungry enough.

Elizabeth. Take the keys of the cellar, and fetch some of the best wine, you have well deserved it. [*Exit*]

Charles. Aunt, I will go with you.

Maria. Come, boy! [*Exeunt.*]

Manet Soldier.

Soldier. The lad does not take after his father, or he would have gone with me to the stable.

Enter GORTZ of Berlingen, and ADELBERT of Falkenheim with attendants.

Gortz. (*Laying his sword and helmet on the table*). Unbuckle my cuirass here, and give me my cloak. Rest will now taste sweet to me. Brother Martin thou saidst well! Falkenheim, you have kept us in breath. (*Falkenheim does not answer, but walks up and down in great agitation.*) Be of good courage, come, disarm; Where are your cloaths? I hope they have not been lost in the scuffle—(*to the page*) ask his pages. Open the baggage, and see that nothing is missing. I can lend you some of mine.

Falkenheim. Let me remain as I am, it signifies not.

Gortz. I can give you a nice clean dress enough: to be sure it is only coarse stuff, 'tis grown too tight for me; I had it on at the marriage of his highness the Count Palatine, that day when your bishop shewed so much

much rancour against me. I had sunk two of his vessels on the Mayne about a fortnight before, and as I and Francis of Sickingen went into the Hart inn at Heidelberg; half way up the stairs there is a landing place with an iron railing, you know; and there stood the bishop, who shook hands with Francis as he passed up, and as I followed gave me too his hand. I laughed within myself, and said to the Landgrave of Hanau, who was always gracious to me, "The bishop took me by the hand, I'd wager any thing he did not know me." The bishop overheard me, for I spoke aloud on purpose, and coming up to me in a great passion, he said, "you have guessed right, it was only because I did not know you that I offered you my hand." My Lord, I answered, I perceived you mistook me, and since that was the case, there you have your hand again. Then the little man grew as red as a lobster with rage, and ran to complain of me to count Lewis, and the prince of Nassau. We have often laughed about it since.

Falkenbelm. I entreat you, leave me to myself.

Gortz. For what reason—*(earnestly,)* I pray you be at ease. You are in my power, but I will never misuse it.

Falkenbelm. I never felt a fear on that account. Your honor and your knighthood both forbid you.

Gortz. And you know well that they both are sacred to me.

Falkenbelm. I am a prisoner—of the rest I am careless.

Gortz. You should not talk thus. Suppose you had to do with princes who would throw you loaded with chains into a dungeon, and perhaps command the watch to rouse you at every quarter from your sleep, or—

[The attendants come in with cloaths, Falkenbelm disarms, and puts them on.]

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. Good morrow, Father.

Gortz. Good morrow boy, *(kissing him)* how have you been of late.

Charles.

Charles. Very clever, father, my aunt says I am very clever.

Gortz. So!

Charles. Have you brought me any thing home?

Gortz. No; not this time.

Charles. I've learnt a great deal since you've been gone. Shall I tell you the story of the good boy?

Gortz. After dinner, after dinner.

Charles. I know something.

Gortz. Why, what may that be?

Charles. "Yarthausen is the name of a village and castle on the river Yart, which has belonged for two centuries by right and by inheritance to the Lords of Berlingen."

Gortz. Dost thou know the Lord of Berlingen?

Charles. (*Looks steadfastly at him.*)

Gortz. (*Aside, laughing*) Through sheer learning he does not know his own father. (*To the child*) Why to whom does Yarthausen belong?

Charles. "Yarthausen is a village and castle on the river Yart."

Gortz. That was not what I asked: I was acquainted with every path, wood, and wild of it, before I knew what river, village, or castle meant. What, is thy mother in the kitchen?

Charles. She is getting some roast lamb and turnips ready.

Gortz. Thou canst tell that then, little scullion boy.

Charles. And my aunt is roasting an apple for my supper.

Gortz. Can't you eat it raw.

Charles. It tastes better roasted.

Gortz. Thou must ever have something set apart for thee. Falkenheim, I will return to you immediately: I must go and see my wife. Come, Charles!

Charles. Who is that man?

Gortz. Go, make him welcome, and tell him to be cheerful.

Charles. There, man! there's my hand for thee. Be merry. Why dinner will be ready directly.

Falkenheim.

Falkenbelm. (Taking him up in his arms and kissing him) Happy Child! who can imagine no greater evil than the delay of the dinner! God give you much joy of the boy! Berlingen.

Gortz. Where there is much light, there will also be strong shadow. Yet was he welcome to me. We will see what is to be done.

[*Exeunt Gortz and Charles.*]

Adelbert of Falkenbelm. (alone)

Oh! that I could awake, and shake off this horrible conviction, as a feverish dream! In Berlingen's power, from which I had just extricated myself! A prisoner to the man I have most injured, whose very remembrance I avoided as I would fire; whom I fought to have crushed to the earth! And he! the same noble-spirited, generous Gortz! Holy God! what can, what will arise from it all? Brought back, Adelbert! into the very hall where we sported together as boys, when thou lov'dst him, with thy first, thy most ardent affections, and hung upon him, and valued him as thine own soul! But who could ever know him, and yet hate him? I am unmanned, I sink to nothing here. Oh! days of innocence and peace, ye are long past for ever, when old Berlingen sat yonder by the fire, while we played together around him, and loved each other with the fervency and the innocence of angels! How will the bishop and my friends be mortified! I know the whole land will take an interest in my misfortune. But what avails it? Can they bestow upon me the treasure that I grasp after?

Enter GORTZ, (with a flask of wine and goblets.)

Gortz. 'Till dinner is ready we'll drink a flask. Come, sit you down, and consider yourself at home. Imagine you are only again with Gortz. 'Tis long since we have sat together, long since we have emptied a flask together.

C

Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. Those times are past for ever!

Gortz. God forbid! Though to be sure, we can scarcely again expect to enjoy days of such careless, uninterrupted happiness, as we passed in our youth at the Margrave's court, when we slept together, and pursued our exercises together. I remember the days of my youth with joy! Don't you recollect my quarrel with that Polish baron, whose curled and frizzled hair I ruffled accidentally with my sleeve?

Falkenbelm. It was at table; he struck at you with his knife.

Gortz. Which I luckily warded off. You took up the quarrel, and attacked his comrade. We always stood by each other like brave youths; and for such every one acknowledged us (*filling his glass,*) Castor and Pollux! What pleasure it gave me when the Margrave addressed us by those names.

Falkenbelm. It was the bishop of Wurtzburg that so named us.

Gortz. He was a most learned lord! and yet so affable: I shall remember as long as I live how he caressed us, commended our affection for each other, and declared, that he considered that man as blessed who possessed a twin-brother in his friend.

Falkenbelm. No more of that!

Gortz. Why not? Nothing is so delightful to me after fatigue, as the remembrance of those pleasures that are past. Truly, when I recollect how we bore joy and sorrow together, were every thing to each other, and how I expected our whole lives would have passed in the same bond of union. Was not this thought all my comfort when this hand was shot away before Landshuten, when thou attendedst and watchedst me with more than brother's affection? I hoped then, that Adelbert would have been in future my right hand, would have supplied the place to me of that I had so unfortunately lost, but now!

Falkenbelm. (*Turning away his face, and with great emotion,*) Oh! do not—

Gortz. If thou hadst but followed me when I entreated

ted thee to follow me to Brabant, all had yet been well. But thou wert then immersed in the frivolous dissipation of a court, in the idle or enervating society of women. Did I not tell thee, when thou gav'st up thy time to titled gossips, when thou prattledst with them of discontented marriages, forsaken maidens, or of the personal defects of their acquaintance, did I not tell thee then, Adelbert, thou wouldst be a villain!

Falkenbelm. (*sternly*) To what purpose all this?

Gortz. Would to God, I could forget, or that it was otherwise! Art thou not as free, as nobly born as any in Germany; subject only to the Emperor, and canst thou crouch amongst vassals? What owest thou to the bishop? Canst thou dread the insult of a powerful neighbour, when thou possessest arms and friends to retort them with interest? Thou undervalest the dignity of a free knight, who depends only on God, his sovereign, and himself; from such a height, Oh! how couldst thou descend, to cringe as the first courtier of a miserable priest?

Falkenbelm. Hear me speak!

Gortz. Why, how canst thou defend thyself?

Falkenbelm. Thou think'st of princes as the wolf of shepherds; and yet canst thou complain that they guard the safety of their country and their people? Is not their peace continually disturbed by those licentious knights who attack their vassals in the open high-ways, who spread fire and desolation in their castles and their villages? But let the hereditary enemy of his throne attack the Emperor, then will danger scarce rouse these bold ones from their inactivity, or insult urge them to protect themselves. In such contingencies, is not that a blessed spirit that inspires princes with the wish of tranquilizing Germany, of defending law and justice, and of securing to every one of every rank, the blessings and advantages of peace? And do we deserve contempt, Berlingen! if we throw ourselves on their protection which is nearest to us, instead of having recourse to that distant majesty which is scarcely in a situation to defend itself?

Gortz.

Gortz. Yes ! yes ! I understand thee Falkenhelm ! Were princes as thou paint'st them, we should indeed have all our most sanguine wishes would require. Tranquillity and peace ! I can easily believe it ! Such is the cry of every marauder who longs for an opportunity of consuming his booty with impunity—The public good !—If they were never grey 'till anxiety on that account made them turn so—And they impose upon our good Emperor in a shameful manner. He means well, and would willingly remove abuses. Every day some new adviser comes, and proposes some new amendment. And because his majesty easily conceives, and need but speak to set thousands in motion, he imagines it as easy to execute as to command.—Proclamation follows proclamation—which are no sooner issued than forgot. But as to those hireling assistants, the mean instruments of princes in their trade, they keep close at their heels, and boast of the peace and security of the kingdom, 'till they have got the little folks completely under their feet. I will be sworn that many of them thank God in their hearts, that the Turk is too powerful for the Emperor to attack.

Falkenhelm. You see only from your own point of view.

Gortz. So does every man ! The question is, on whose side is right and light ; and your ways at least shun the day.

Falkenhelm. You are authorised to speak—I am your prisoner.

Gortz. If your conscience is pure, you are free !—But how is this boasted peace of the land preserved ? I remember well, when as a boy of sixteen I attended the Margrave to the diet, how vehemently the princes harangued upon the subject, and how loudly the ecclesiastics in particular declaimed in its favour. Your Bishop quite deafened the good Emperor with his clamor ; as if, forsooth ! his heart had been the very seat of justice and uprightness. And now he himself, in defiance of those doctrines, and at the very moment when I least expected it, dares to seize and detain one of my followers ! Has not every thing between us been accommodated ? What has he to do with that man ?

Falkenhelm.

Falkenbelm. It happened without his knowledge.

Gortz. Why then does he not give him up again?

Falkenbelm. Because your follower has not behaved as he ought to have done?

Gortz. (*With great contempt*) Has not behaved as he ought to have done! By my oath, he has done as he ought to have done, as certainly as he has been taken prisoner by your and the bishop's connivance. Do you imagine that I was only born to-day, that I cannot see into your designs?

Falkenbelm. Your suspicions carry you too far, and do us an injustice.

Gortz. Adelbert! Shall I speak to you from my heart? I am a thorn in your sight, as insignificant as I am, nor are Sickingen or Selbitz less so, because we are resolved to perish rather than thank any one except God for the air we breathe, or to pledge our fealty or services to any but the Emperor. 'Tis for this reason you seek to ensnare me, for this that you calumniate me to his majesty, to your friends, and to my neighbours, and are continually watching to take advantages against me. You are determined to get me out of your way, by any means, and at any rate. For this you took my vassal prisoner, because you suspected I had sent him out as a spy upon you, and only in this has he offended you, that he refused to betray his master to you. And thou, Adelbert! art their tool, their engine!

Falkenbelm. Berlingen!

Gortz. No more of it! I detest these explanations: one party or the other is ever deceived by them, and commonly both.

CHARLES. (*running in*)

Dinner! Dinner! Father.

Gortz. A pleasant hearing! Come, Falkenhelm: you were wont to be pleased with the society of women; and I hope my family may contribute to render you more cheerful.

[*Exeunt*]
SCENE,

SCENE, *The Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.*

The Dining Hall.

*The BISHOP OF BAMBERG, ABBOT OF FULDA,
OLEARIUS, VERITAS, COURTIER, at Table.*

The Desert remaining. Servants attending with wine.

Bishop. Do many of the German nobility study at present at Bologna?

Olearius. Many, both of the noble and plebeian ranks; and to speak without vanity, they bear away the highest praises from thence. The expression, "As studious as a German nobleman," has quite passed into a proverb among the academicians. And while those of a lower rank evince the most laudable ambition to obtain those distinctions from talents which birth has denied them; the nobles strive with a generous emulation to add the graces of accomplishments to the splendor of their native and inborn dignity.

Veritas. "As studious as a German nobleman!" that is a proverb I never heard in my life before!

Olearius. I assure you it is true; they are the admiration of the whole university. Some of the eldest and most learned will soon return with doctor's degrees. The Emperor will be happy to invest them with the first dignities of the state.

Bishop. No doubt he will.

Abbot of Fulda. Do you happen to know a young man—he—he—comes from Hesse.

Olearius. There are many Hessians there.

Abbot of Fulda. His name is—his name is—Can none of you tell? His mother was a *von*—Oh! his father had lost an eye, and was *Marshal von*—

Veritas. Von Wildenholz?

Abbot of Fulda. Yes, Von Wildenholz.

Olearius. Oh! yes, I know him perfectly well. He is a young man of great promise. He is particularly admired for his talent in disputation.

Abbot

Abbot of Fulda. That he had from his mother.

Veritas. I dare say her husband never admired her for it.

Bishop. What did you say was the name of that Emperor who wrote your famous code of laws?

Olearius. Justinian.

Bishop. A great man! To his good health!

Olearius. To his memory! (*They drink.*)

Abbot of Fulda. That must be a very fine book.

Olearius. It may indeed be called the *book of books*. A complete epitome of all laws; that prepares a decision for every case that can present itself. And whatever may occur obsolete or obscure, is elucidated by the glossaries with which the most learned men of the age have ornamented and enriched this invaluable work.

Abbot of Fulda. An epitome of all laws! Why, the ten commandments then must be among them?

Olearius. *Implicite*, certainly, not *explicite*.

Abbot of Fulda. That was what I meant.

Bishop. And what to me appears the most admirable, a kingdom as you say might enjoy the securest peace and freedom, where these laws were perfectly established and judiciously administered.

Olearius. Without doubt.

Bishop. Come, To all Doctors of Laws. (*Drinking.*)

Olearius. I know how to appreciate the high honor you do me. Would to God such were the sentiments of my native country.

Abbot of Fulda. From whence are you, most learned Sir?

Olearius. From Frankfort on the Mayne—at your Eminency's service.

Bishop. Are not gentlemen of your profession in high repute there? From whence can that arise?

Olearius. It is singular enough. I only returned there to claim my patrimonial inheritance, and the people had very near stoned me when they understood I was a doctor of laws.

Abbot of Fulda. God forbid.

Olearius.

Olearius. But I account for it in this manner.—The jurisdiction which is at present in the greatest force and credit all around there, is exercised by men who are totally ignorant of the Roman system of law; they consider it sufficient to possess from age and experience an exact knowledge of the private and public situation of the town. Thus its inhabitants, and the neighbourhood, are regulated by old customs, and governed by few statutes.

Abbot of Fulda. That is a good plan.

Olearius. But human life is short, and in one generation every case will not occur. Our code is a collection of precedents for centuries back. Besides, the will and opinions of mortals are modified by chance and by caprice, and what the occurrence of to-day justifies, the event of to-morrow will condemn: Thus confusion and injustice are unavoidable. All this is determined and prevented by the laws, for the laws are decisive and unchangeable.

Abbot of Fulda. That is certainly better.

Olearius. The improvement will not be acknowledged by the people, who however fond they may be of variety, are always in the highest degree disgusted by any novelty that proposes to lead them out of their course, even though the alteration should be of the greatest benefit to them. They consider persons of my profession as enemies to the state, or defrauders of the public, and are almost mad with rage, when one of us only thinks of establishing himself amongst them.

Veritas. You are from Frankfort. I am well acquainted with many of that place, and was there at the Emperor Maximilian's coronation. I do not however remember any of your name.

Olearius. My father was called *Oilman*, but to avoid mistakes in the title of my Latin works, I distinguish myself, after the example, and by the advice of many celebrated literati, by the name of *Olearius*.

Veritas. You did well to translate it—a prophet receives no honour in his native country, and your name might have been liable to a similar neglect in its original language.

Olearius.

Olearius. It was not in that apprehension that I changed it.

Veritas. Most things have two causes.

Abbot of Fulda. (*musing*) A prophet has no honor in his own country—hem!—hem!

Veritas. Does your Reverence know why?

Abbot of Fulda. I suppose because he was born and bred there.

Veritas. Certainly that is one of the reasons. The other is, because on a nearer acquaintance with these seers, the halo of reverential awe and devotion vanishes, which at a distance dazzled and deceived us; and they then sink down to an equality with the meanest of their neighbours.

Olearius. Are you paid for telling truth?

Veritas. I have the honesty to think it, and the courage to speak it.

Olearius. But you are still deficient in one excellent qualification; the discretion to know where and when to apply it.

Veritas. My remark cannot be inapplicable, since it excites your resentment.

Olearius. Court fools are distinguished by their motley suit; and it were childish to resent any thing they say or do in the course of their profession. By way of precaution however, I would advise you to assume the cap and bells.

Veritas. Nay! where did you take your degree—that I may make a memorandum of it, and go immediately to the right place, in case I should ever feel inclined to follow your advice?

Olearius. You are impertinent.

Veritas. And you are conceited.

(*The bishop, abbot, &c laugh.*)

Bishop. Come, Come; not so hasty, sirs! Nothing that passes at table ought to be resented: Let us change the conversation, *Veritas.*

Veritas. There is a place called Saxenhausen, near Frankfort—

Olearius.

Olearius. What is said now of the expedition against the Turks, my lord?

Bishop. The emperor has no wish so near his heart at present, as to tranquilise the Empire, to reconcile civil discords, and to strengthen and support the judicial authority.—When these ends are accomplished, they say, he means to march in person against the enemies of his throne and of christianity. At present, domestic divisions completely employ his attention, and in spite of a forty year's peace, the country has the appearance of a field of battle. Franconia, Suabia, the Upper Rhine, and the adjacent provinces, are laid waste by the inroads of daring and licentious knights. Sickingen, the maimed Selbitz, and Berlingen with the Iron hand, brave, in that neighbourhood, the imperial authority. The last in particular, has been, for many years past, my irreconcilable enemy, and has distressed and molested me beyond expression. But I have every reason to hope, this will not be much longer in his power. The emperor holds his court at present at Augsburg: we have taken our measures, and I think they cannot fail. Doctor, are you acquainted with Adelbert of Falkenheim?

Olearius. No, an't please your highness.

Bishop. If you but wait his arrival, you may congratulate yourself on having seen the noblest, most accomplished, and most graceful knight of Christendom.

Olearius. He must, indeed, possess superlative merit, who could deserve such an eulogium from such a mouth.

Veritas. And yet he never was at an University.

Bishop. We know that. (*To the servants who run to the windows*) what has happened?

Servant. Farber, Falkenheim's servant is riding through the castle gates.

Bishop. See what he brings; he comes to announce his master. [*Exit Veritas.*] (*The company rise, but drink all round once more.*)

Veritas returns.

Bishop. Well! what news?

Veritas.

Veritas. Such as I wish any one else had the office of communicating to you. Falkenheim is taken prisoner!

Bishop. Is it possible?

Veritas. Berlingen surprised him and his three attendants near the Haslacher Wood, and one only has escaped to bring you the intelligence.

Abbot of Fulda. A Job's messenger!

Olearius. How sincerely do I sympathise in your highness's distress!

Bishop. I will see Farber. Let him come up. I will speak to him myself. Conduct him to my cabinet.

[Exit]

(*The abbot seating himself*) One more draught!

(*The servants serve him with wine*)

Olearius. Would not your reverence please to take a little turn in the garden? "*Post coenam stabis, seu passus mille meabis.*"

Veritas. I assure you, sitting so long after dinner is very unwholesome for you. You'll be having another apoplectic fit.

(*The abbot rises hastily*)

Veritas. (*Aside*) If I can but once get him into the garden, I'll take good care he has exercise enough.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE, Yartbausen, Gortz's Castle.

MARIA and ADELBERT of FALKENHELM.

Maria. You tell me you love me, and I am delighted to believe it. I trust I shall be happy with you, and I hope to render you so.

Falkenheim. Every other passion is absorbed in that of affection for thee. (*Embracing her*)

Maria. Leave me, I intreat you; one kiss I have permitted you as an earnest of my regard, but you seem inclined to take possession already of that which is only yours upon conditions.

Falkenbelm. You are too severe, Maria; innocent affection, instead of offending the deity, is pleasing in his sight.

Maria. It may be so; but I am not convinced of that text. I have been taught, that the careffes of love are like chains, powerful from their connexion with each other; and that maidens when they love, are weaker than Sampson after the loss of his locks.

Falkenbelm. Who taught you that? (*laughing.*)

Maria. The abbess of my convent. I lived solely with her, 'till I was sixteen years of age, and only with you do I experience that happiness which I enjoyed in her society. She had loved, and dared to speak of it. She had a generous and feeling heart. She was indeed an excellent woman.

Falkenbelm. In that she resembled thee! (*taking her band*) What regret shall I experience in being obliged to leave thee!

Maria. Some slight uneasiness I hope you will feel, for I know well what I shall suffer. (*Withdrawing her band*) But ought you not to be gone?

Falkenbelm. Yes, my beloved, and I will; for I feel what future bliss this temporary sacrifice will purchase for me. Blessed be thy brother, and the day he sallied forth in pursuit of me.

Maria. He ever entertained hopes of winning you back to his friendship. "Farewell," he said, as he took leave of us, "I will try if it be possible to recover him."

Falkenbelm. He has bound me to him for ever! How bitterly do I now repent, that the idleness and dissipation of the court seduced me to neglect the management and welfare of my estates. Thou mightest otherwise have been mine immediately.

Maria. But even this delay has its pleasures.

Falkenbelm. Do not say so Maria, or I shall fear thy affection is less ardent than my own. But I deserve to do penance, and what delightful hopes will accompany my pilgrimage, and cheer my every step! To be all thine! To live alone for thee, within the circle of my own domains, withdrawn and secluded from the world—

to

to enjoy all that delight which two hearts sincerely attached can lavish on each other!—What is the favor of princes, the gratification of ambition's vainest expectations, or vanity's most presumptuous prayers, in comparison of the simple, heartfelt bliss which such a situation can bestow? I had cherished improbable wishes—I had indulged romantic hopes; but bliss like this will more than satisfy every desire; more than realize every expectation.

Enter GORTZ.

Gortz. Your page is returned; he can scarce speak from fatigue and hunger. My wife is giving him some refreshment, but this much I can discover, the bishop will not give up my vassal. Commissaries are to be nominated by the emperor, and a day appointed to decide the cause. Be that as it will, Adelbert, you are free. I require only your hand, and your promise that, for the future, you will never engage with my open or secret enemies.

Falkenbelm. There is my hand: and from this moment, may friendship and confidence between us, be as the eternal laws of nature, everlasting, and unchangeable! Permit me also to take this hand, (*taking Maria's*) and with it the possession of the most lovely of women.

Gortz. (*To Maria*) May I give consent for you.

Maria. If you think, as I do, that it ought to be given.

Gortz. It is most happy that our wishes agree. Thou need'st not blush so. Yes, then, Adelbert, give thou thy hand, (*joining Falkenbelm and Maria's hands*) and so say I, Amen!—My friend and brother!—I thank thee sister; thou canst spin more than flax; thou hast woven a thread to enchain a bird of paradise. Thou look'st not quite at ease, though, Adelbert? What is wanting to thy joy?—I—am quite happy.—What I could only hope in dreams, waking I see accomplished, and fear that I still sleep! Ah now my dream's explain'd. Methought last night, I offered thee my Iron right hand, Adelbert; thou graspedst it with such force, that, lo! it broke asunder from my armlet. I shudder'd, and wak'd. Had I only continued my dream I might have found that,

that thou gav'st me instead of it, a powerful and living hand. Thou must now away, to put thy castle and domains in order. That vile court has made thee neglect both. I must call my wife. Elizabeth! (*calling*)

Maria. My brother's joy is unbounded.

Falkenbelm. Yet it does not equal mine.

Gortz. (*To Maria*) Thou wilt be settled in such a delightful country.

Maria. Franconia is a blessed land.

Falkenbelm. And my castle is situated in the most beautiful and fertile part of it.

Gortz. It is indeed. Here flows the Mayne, and beyond it, gradually rising, clad with vineyards and corn-fields, towers the hill which is crowned by your castle. The river makes an abrupt angle behind, close round its rocky foundations: the windows of the great hall look directly down upon the water, and command a noble prospect of many leagues extent.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Gortz. (*To her*) Thou must offer thy blessing and congratulations here. These two are betrothed.

Elizabeth. So suddenly!

Gortz. But yet not inconsiderately.

Elizabeth. (*To Falkenbelm*) May you ever value her as sincerely as you do at this moment, and enjoy felicity in proportion as you are attached to her.

Falkenbelm. Amen! I desire no happiness but on this condition.

Gortz. The bridegroom, dear wife, is obliged to take a short journey, for this great change in his situation will draw many smaller after it. In the first place, he will forsake, for ever, the bishop and his court, and will suffer his friendship there to expire, by degrees, in absence; and he must recover the management of his estates, entrusted, so long to the hands of rapacious and self-interested stewards; and he intends—but come sister, come, Elizabeth; we will leave him to himself.

His

His page has, doubtless, some private messages to deliver to him.

Falkenbelm. Nothing that I should wish to conceal from you.

Gortz. There is no need of our presence. Franconia and Suabia! ye are again united. How may we now trample on the pride of the princes!

[*Exeunt Gortz, Elizabeth, and Maria*]

Falkenbelm, (alone)

God of heaven! Canst thou prepare such bliss for one so unworthy of it? It is too great for my heart. How abjectly have I depended upon those whom I fancied I governed; upon the smiles of princes, upon the approbation of the worthless crowd that surrounded me! Gortz, dearest Gortz! thou hast restored me to myself; and thou, Maria! hast completed the thorough revolution in my soul. I feel as free as air. Bamberg I will never more behold. I will tear asunder every bond of that shameful connexion, which enchained my every faculty, and bound me down beneath myself. My heart expands again. These are no dangerous struggles after forbidden greatness. He, surely, is alone truly noble and happy, who to preserve his independence inviolable, needs neither to govern, nor to obey.

Enter FREDERICK, (Page to Falkenbelm)

Frederick. God keep you, my noble lord! I bring you so many greetings, that I scarcely know which to mention first. Bamberg, and ten miles round Bamberg, send you a thousand greetings.

Falkenbelm. Welcome, Frederic! And what more dost thou bring?

Frederic. It is impossible to describe how highly you are valued by all at court.

Falkenbelm. That will not last long.

Frederic. As long as you live. And after you die, their regard will shew brighter than the brass letters upon
your

your tomb-stone. How sincerely do they take part in your misfortunes !

Falkenbelm. What said the Bishop ?

Frederic. He was so anxious to be inform'd of every particular, that he prevented my answers with the eagerness of his questions. The news soon reach'd him. Farber, who escaped from Haslach, brought him the first account of it. He asked a thousand times over, if I was certain you were unhurt ; I assured him you were safe from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot.

Falkenbelm. What said he to the proposal ?

Frederic. He was at first resolved immediately to yield up every thing, and to offer the vassal and a ransom besides to purchase your freedom ; but when he heard you would be restor'd to liberty without any conditions, and had only to pledge your word that his vassal should be restored ; he determin'd to intreat the Emperor to nominate commissioners, and to appoint a day for the trial of the cause. He gave me a thousand messages which I have forgotten again ; and preach'd a long long tedious sermon on the text, " I cannot exist without Adelbert."

Falkenbelm. He must learn.

Frederic. What do you mean ? he bade me intreat you to hasten your return, and to assure you that he waited your arrival with the utmost impatience.

Falkenbelm. Let him wait !—I will never return.

Frederic. Not return to Court, my Lord ! what can possibly have induced you to form such a resolution ? if you knew what I know ; if you could only dream what I have seen.

Falkenbelm. Why, what is that ?

Frederic. The mere remembrance transports me beyond myself ! Bamberg is no longer Bamberg ; an angel in the form of woman has transform'd it into the vestibule of heaven.

Falkenbelm. Is that all ?

Frederic. I wish I may turn monk if you see her, and do not lose your senses with admiration.

Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. Who is she?

Frederic. Adelaide of Walldorf.

Falkenbelm. She! I have heard much of her beauty.

Frederic. Heard! that is as if you were to say, I have seen music. How is it possible for the tongue to describe that beauty in whose presence the eye abash'd and dazzled, is depriv'd of its power of vision?

Falkenbelm. Why thou art beside thyself.

Frederic. That may be. The last time I saw her I was as much deprived of my senses as one intoxicated; or, rather I felt, at the moment, in such a trance, as saints experience at the sight of angels. Every sense stronger, more elevated, and more perfect, and yet the proper use of none.

Falkenbelm. This is singular enough.

Frederic. When I took leave of the bishop, she was sitting beside him: they were playing at chess. He was very gracious, presented me his hand to kiss, and said a great deal to me, which I did not hear a word of, so completely were my senses engaged by his companion. She sat with her eyes fixed upon the chess-board, as if she meditated some great stroke. A beautiful arch smile played on her mouth and cheek. I wished myself the ebony king as she laid her snowy hand upon him. Nobleness and grace sat united on her brow, and the dazzling fairness of her face and bosom, was heightened by the dark locks that fell in waves upon them.

Falkenbelm. Thou art become a poet on the occasion

Frederic. I felt, at that moment, all those fine sensations that create the poet. One single and powerful emotion possessed my whole heart. When the bishop had ended, I bowed, (for I could not speak) and she, turning to me, said, "And bear my greetings to him, though a stranger. Entreat him to hasten his return; tell him new friends wait his arrival with impatience, and bid him not despise them, though he be already so rich in old ones." I would have answered; but the passage from my heart to my tongue was closed. I only bowed; I would have given all I possess on earth to have but touched her

her hand! As I stood entranced, the bishop let fall one of the ches-men: I stooped to reach it, and as I rose, brushed the folds of her robe. The touch thrilled like lightening through my every vein, and—and—I know not how I got out of the room.

Falkenbelm. Is her husband at court?

Frederic. She has been a widow these four months, and seeks to dispel her melancholy at Bamberg. You will see her. When she turns her eyes full upon one, 'tis as if one stood under the influence of the first mild sun-beams of spring.

Falkenbelm. It will have but a weak effect upon me.

Frederic. Why I am told you are on the point of marriage.

Falkenbelm. And would to heaven the engagement were fulfilled! My gentle Maria will form the happiness of my life; her meek soul is imaged in her mild blue eyes, and like an angel of heaven, composed wholly of innocence and love, she will conduct my harrassed soul to peace and joy. Be prepared, and let us away to my castle; I will not return to Bamberg if St. Veit himself were in person to invite me. [Exit.]

Frederic. (Alone.) Be that as God shall direct; we will hope the best! Maria is amiable and beautiful, and I cannot be surprised that she should fascinate the heart of one despairing, and a prisoner. In her eyes is mild comfort, and sympathetic melancholy;—but in thine, Adelaide, is fire—is life—is sublimity! I shall become—I am mad. Such is the power of one glance of thine!—My lord must return—I must return—and then I will gaze upon her, either till I recover my senses, or become perfectly insane.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

THE BISHOP'S PALACE AT BAMBERG. A HALL.

The BISHOP and ADELAIDE playing at chess. Ladies and Courtiers attending. VERITAS with a lute—he plays and sings. After the song, ADELAIDE speaks.

Adelaide. YOU do not attend to your game, my lord! Check to the king!

Bishop. I have still a move.

Adelaide. But you will not have one long. Check to the king!

Veritas. If I were a great man, I would never play this game, and would forbid it, both at my court, and throughout my whole dominions.

Adelaide. It is, indeed, the very touchstone of the brain.

Veritas. It is not on that account I object to it, but I would rather hear the tolling of a death-bell, the shrieks of ominous birds, or the clamours of the sleepless watch-dog, conscience, than the wearying repetition of castles, knights and pawns, and the everlasting cry of "Check to the king."

Bishop. To whom else would such strange ideas occur?

Veritas.

Veritas. To one for instance, who possess'd a weak mind and a strong conscience, which indeed very commonly accompany each other. You call it a royal game, and say it was invented for the amusement of a monarch, who rewarded the inventor with immense riches. If this be true, methinks I see the prince before me; a minor in understanding and in years, under the regency of his mother or the government of his wife; with white down on his chin, and flaxen hair upon his head; passive and pliant as a willow-shoot, and one who liked playing with the ladies, not out of love for them (God forbid!) but merely by way amusement. His tutor, too idle for a scholar, and too awkward for a courtier, invented this game *in usum Delphini*, which proved so wonderfully congenial to his majesty's humour; and so on, &c.

Adelaide. Checkmate!—You shall fill up the chasms in our worm eaten Chronicles, *Veritas*.

Veritas. The gaps in your genealogical registers rather; that were the more profitable employment; since the merits of our ancestors, and their figures on canvas, now serve for almost the same purposes; the one to decorate the empty walls of our apartments, and the other to gloss over the weak side of our characters.

Bishop. He will never return! did you say?

Adelaide. I intreat you turn your thoughts from this disagreeable subject.

Bishop. What can be the motives of such a sudden resolution?

Veritas. Oh! the causes may as easily be counted over as the beads of a rosary; he has fallen into a fit of contrition, from which I could very soon rouse him.

Bishop. Attempt it then for God's sake! Ride over to him.

Veritas. Give me my credentials!

Bishop. They shall be unlimited. Leave no means untried by which you can possibly bring him back to me.

Veritas. May I not make use of your name too, my gracious lady?
Adelaide.

Adelaide. Certainly, with discretion.

Veritas. That is such an indefinite commission.—

Adelaide. Are you so little acquainted with my character, or such a novice in the world, as not to know in what tone you are to speak of me to Falkenheim?

Veritas. In the tone of a quail-pipe I suppose.

Adelaide. It is in vain to hope that you will ever reform.

Bishop. Go! go! take the best horse in my stables, chuse your attendants; use any means, only bring him back to me.

Veritas. If I do not persuade him to return with me, you shall say that an old woman who undertakes to conjure away warts and summer freckles, understands more of sympathy than I do.

Bishop. But what will the accomplishment of my wish avail me? Berlingen has won him over completely: if he returns, it will only be to leave us again immediately.

Veritas. That will certainly be his intention, but whether he will have resolution to execute it, is a question. A pressure of the hand from a powerful prince, or a smile of endearment from a beautiful woman, are fascinations from which a man of Falkenheim's character does not easily escape. I will hasten to set off, and recommend me to your Highness.

Bishop. May your journey be successful!

Adelaide. Farewell.

[*Exit Veritas.*]

Bishop. If he but once return I depend upon you to detain him.

Adelaide. (*Laughing*) Do you intend to make a lime-twigg of me?

Bishop. Not so.

Adelaide. A decoy bird, then?

Bishop. No; that part, Veritas is to play. I beseech you however, do not refuse what none but yourself possesses the power of performing.

Adelaide. We shall see.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE.

SCENE. *Yartbausen, Gortz's Castle.*

HANS of *Selbitz*, and GORTZ of *Berlingen*.

Selbitz. You are completely justified in having declared war against the Nurembergers.

Gortz. It would have consumed my very heart to have remain'd much longer in their debt. It is as clear as day, that 'twas they who betrayed my vassal to the Bambergers, but they shall have cause to remember me for it.

Selbitz. They have an old enmity against you.

Gortz. And I against them; but I am not sorry that they should be the aggressors.

Selbitz. The judicial and ecclesiastical parties still stand firmly by each other.

Gortz. Their cause requires it.

Selbitz. We will make a hell hot enough for them.

Gortz. I rely upon your assistance against them. Would to God, the Burgo-master of Nuremberg, with his golden chain round his neck, were but once in our power; we would astonish him in spite of his learning.

Selbitz. I understand Falkenheim is returned to your party; when will he join us?

Gortz. Not immediately. He has still some affairs, which will not allow him to declare openly on our side; but one advantage is already ours, since he will no longer take part against us. The Bishop, deprived of him, is what the mitre is without the Bishop.

Selbitz. When are we to commence our march?

Gortz. To-morrow, or the morning after. Many tradesmen of Nuremberg and Bamberg will now be on their road, returning from the mart at Frankfort. We shall find them a rich prize, if we are lucky enough to meet them.

Selbitz. God grant we may!

[*Exeunt*]

BAMBERG.

BAMBERG.

ADELAIDE'S APARTMENT.

ADELAIDE and her Attendant.

Adelaide. He is arrived, didst thou say? I can scarce believe it.

Attendant. If I had not seen him with my own eyes, I should doubt it.

Adelaide. Veritas may now coin the bishop into gold; he has, indeed, performed a master-stroke.

Attendant. I saw him enter the palace. He was mounted on a beautiful high spirited grey: The horse took fright as it was passing over the draw-bridge, and could not be induced to move from the spot. The people, who had come out in crowds to gaze on him, rejoiced at the opportunity the horse's stubbornness afforded them of gratifying their curiosity.—Every tongue blessed him; every voice greeted him; and with a graceful bending he returned thanks to all. With a dignified indifference he managed his proud steed, whose restiveness he at length conquered, by mingled threats and caresses, and he entered the palace gates accompanied only by Veritas and a few attendants.

Adelaide. Didst thou think him as handsome as they report him?

Attendant. He rather surpassed than fell short of all I had heard of him. He is as like the emperor here, (*pointing to a portrait of Maximilian*) as if he were his son; the nose only something more delicately formed; but with just such mild hazle eyes, and just such beautiful light-auburn hair: and a figure! formed for a model; a half pensive cast, that shaded his face, I know not how it was, pleased me beyond expression.

Adelaide. I have the strongest curiosity to see him.

Attendant. What a husband were there for you!

Adelaide. Fool!

Attendant. Children and fools you know—

Enter

Enter VERITAS.

Veritas. Now my gracious lady, what do I deserve.

Adelaide. By what power of persuasion have you been able to bring him back?

Veritas. You know already how woodcocks are caught; shall I teach you the mysteries of my art also? First then, I affected to be totally ignorant of the change in his sentiments, and thus put him to the necessity of relating the whole affair to me:—this I pretended to regard in a point of view intirely different from that in which he had seen it; could not discover—could not imagine—and so on, &c. Then by the slight and apparently accidental mention of those at Bamberg, for whom he was most interested, I awaken'd a thousand remembrances, which I knew he could not indulge without regret; and when I perceiv'd I had set his imagination to work, I link'd artfully together a chain of connexions which I found broken. He could not account for it, but he felt a new impulse to return to Bamberg; and while he had recourse to his heart, to endeavour to discover the secret springs by which such an inclination had been excited there, and was too much occupied by his own feelings to perceive my intentions, I threw over his neck a magic net woven of three powerful cords—the favour of princes—the beauty of woman—and the allurements of flattery; and thus have I drawn him in triumph hither.

Adelaide. What did you say of me?

Veritas. Merely the truth; that you had been put to some inconvenience with regard to your estates, which you depended on his powerful interest with the Emperor to remove.

Adelaide. That was well.

Veritas. The bishop is conducting him hither, to introduce him to you.

Adelaide. I attend them, [*Exit Veritas.*] and with sensations, such as I have rarely experienced at the expectation of a visit.

[*Exeunt*]

YARTHAUSEN

YARTHAUSEN.—*The Dining Hall.*

GORTZ of Berlingen, HANS of Selbitz,
GEORGE, (*in the dress of a common Soldier.*)

Gortz. And thou hast not been able to see him, George?

George. He had rode over to Bamberg, the day before, accompanied only by Veritas and two servants.

Gortz. I cannot imagine what his return thither should mean.

Selbitz. I understand it perfectly. Your reconciliation was too hasty to be lasting; and Veritas is an artful fellow, who has persuaded him to break his engagements.

Gortz. Canst thou imagine he would be so base? so perjured?

Selbitz. The first step towards it is certainly already taken.

Gortz. I will never believe it! who knows what urgent business required his return to court? Let us hope the best.

Selbitz. God grant he may deserve your good opinion.

Gortz. A stratagem occurs to me. Let us disguise George in the armour and badge of the vassals of Falkenheim; we can give him the watch-word, and he may ride over to Bamberg, and bring us intelligence of what is passing there.

George. This is just what I have been wishing for so long!

Gortz. It is thy first exploit; be careful, boy! I should be grieved to the heart if any evil should befall thee.

George. Oh I'll take care. I should mind them no more if they were to attack me, than so many rats and mice.

[*Exeunt.*]

BAMBERG.

E

BAMBERG.

BISHOP and ADELBERT of Falkenbelm.

Bishop. Wilt thou no longer suffer us to detain thee?

Falkenbelm. You cannot desire that I should break my oath?

Bishop. I could have desired that you had never sworn it. What evil spirit misled thee? Could I not have obtained thy freedom without so mean a concession? Have I so little influence with the emperor?

Falkenbelm. 'Tis done, and is irrevocable. Can you forgive me?

Bishop. What on earth could have induced thee to take such a step? To renounce me for ever! What perjury didst thou commit in entering into such an engagement! Is not his vassal in our power? Would I not have offered him a ransom? Our plans against him and his adherents were so near ripe for execution! Alas!—I forget that I am speaking to his friend, to one that is now straining every nerve against me—to whom it will be easy to turn the force of that mine which he himself has laid.

Falkenbelm. My dear lord—

Bishop. And yet when I look upon thy face, when I hear thy voice—it is not possible—it is not possible!

Falkenbelm. Farewell, my gracious lord.

Bishop. May God preserve thee, my son! Once, when we parted, I said, my blessing rest upon thee 'till we meet again! Now, God grant we may never see each other more!

Falkenbelm. My lord!

Bishop. Perhaps, I may live to see thee enter with fire and sword within my walls, to behold thee laying waste these plains, that owe their now peaceful verdure to thy protection.

Falkenbelm. Never, my lord.

Bishop. Thou canst not answer for thyself: the temporal princes, my neighbours, are all my enemies. As long as thy valor protected me—yet I will say no more.
Thou

Thou canst not know the extent of the ruin thou hast caused.

[Exit.]

Falkenbelm. What should I say?—

Enter Frederic.

Frederic. The countess Adelaide expects your lordship. Though she is indisposed, she would not have you depart without bidding you farewell.

Falkenbelm. Let us be gone!

Frederic. And must we certainly leave this place for ever?

Falkenbelm. This very night.

Frederic. It appears to me as if I were about to quit this world.

Falkenbelm. I feel the same sensation, and with increased anxiety, as if I knew not into what other world I was going.

[Exeunt]

ADELAIDE'S Apartment.

ATTENDANT and ADELAIDE.

Attendant. Your ladyship looks so faint, so pale—

Adelaide. I love him not, and yet I would have him stay! Canst thou not understand me? though I might not accept him as a husband, yet I may value his society.

Attendant. Do you think he will go, Madam?

Adelaide. He is at this moment taking leave of the bishop.

Attendant. He has still another difficult pass to surmount.

Adelaide. What dost thou mean?

Attendant. Can your ladyship misunderstand me? You have ensnared his heart, and if he will tear it from the hook, it must bleed at every pore.

Enter ADELBERT of Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. (*Looking at her with great anxiety*) Is your ladyship ill?

Adelaide. Why that question? to you who are about to leave us—to leave us for ever, it must be indifferent whether I live or die.

Falkenbelm. How cruelly do you misjudge me!

Adelaide. And yet I form my opinions from your conduct.

Falkenbelm. Appearances deceive.

Adelaide. Are you then a Camelion?

Falkenbelm. Oh! if you could but look into my heart—

Adelaide. Fine things would then come to my knowledge.

Falkenbelm. Beautiful ones certainly—since you would find your own image there.

Adelaide. Laid up I suppose in some corner among the pictures of ancient families extinct. I intreat you to remember, Falkenbelm! with whom you speak. Falsehoods are never so necessary as when they serve as a cloak for our actions. A masque who is known, plays a miserable part. Your actions speak for themselves, and yet you attempt to contradict them. What should we conclude of you?

Falkenbelm. What you will. I am so weary of what I am, that I am totally careless what I may appear.

Adelaide. You came, I thought, to take leave of me.

Falkenbelm. Let me but kiss your hand, I will then be gone—Even you remind me!—(*confused and agitated*) I had forgot—perhaps I intrude upon your leisure, Madam?

Adelaide. You mistake me—I only desired to assist your wishes—you appeared so impatient—since you will go—

Falkenbelm. Oh! say I must. Does not my honor

as a knight oblige me? the holy faith I pledged with my hand to Berlingen?

Adelaide. (*With great contempt*) Go! go! and tell such tales to maidens who have studied the records of a tournament, 'till they fancy themselves in love with the heroes of it. Knightly honor! Children's play.

Falkenbelm. These cannot be your real sentiments.

Adelaide. (*With great animation*) By my honor! you impose upon yourself. What have you promised, and to whom? You have pledged your alliance and friendship to a man, who has renounced his allegiance to his sovereign, his duty to his country: Who at the very moment of your engagement was amenable to the laws of the empire for having dared to seize you, a free baron, as his prisoner.—A bond of friendship and alliance! which in such circumstances none but you would consider as valid. Oh! talk not thus to us: we are no longer children, to be imposed on by such senseless stories. Undertakings of greater moment lie conceal'd under the frivolous pretext. Is it possible that Falkenbelm should become the enemy of his Sovereign? the disturber of the peace and happiness of his country? the associate of a robber? Thou Adelbert! with thy mild generous spirit?

Falkenbelm. If you but knew him!

Adelaide. I will do him justice. I know he possesses a high unbending spirit; but his very virtues will be thy misfortunes. Go! and imagine thyself the associate of his power, while he disdains to consider thee but as the humble instrument of his greatness. Go! and fancy thyself his companion, while his imperious spirit shall sink thee to his slave. Thou art gentle, affable—

Falkenbelm. So is he.

Adelaide. But thou art yielding and compliant, while he is stern and inexorable. Imperceptibly will he hurry thee away, and thou who might'st have been the governor of princes, wilt stoop to be the vassal of a nobleman! (*checking herself and quite coolly*) but it is

cruel thus to point out to thee the miseries of the lot thou hast chosen.

Falkenbelm. If you could but imagine with what friendship, what hospitality he treated me.

Adelaide. Hospitality! canst thou impute that to him as a virtue? it was his duty; and what hadst thou lost had he behaved otherwise? To me a less studied attention had more recommended him. The imperious spirit that stoops to employ.—

Falkenbelm. (*Interrupting her*) You speak of your enemy.

Adelaide. I speak for your liberty.—And yet I know not why I should so warmly interest myself. Farewell, my Lord. (*going*)

Falkenbelm. One moment I conjure you! (*takes her hand and remains silent.*) (*pause*)

Adelaide. Have you any thing further to say to me?

Falkenbelm. I must go.

Adelaide. Begone then.

Falkenbelm. My heart—I—I cannot!

Adelaide. You must!

Falkenbelm. Shall that be the last glance from those eyes?

Adelaide. Begone, I am ill; I am faint; and in a most unseasonable moment. (*Supporting herself against a pillar: he offers her assistance, which she rejects with disdain*)

Falkenbelm. Look not so on me, for pity: you know not—

Adelaide. Wilt thou persist in becoming our enemy, and yet expect that I should smile on thee? Begone.

Falkenbelm. Adelaide!

Adelaide. I detest thee.

Enter Frederic.

Frederic. My Lord, the Bishop requests to speak with you.

Adelaide. Begone! begone! (*with great emotion*)

Frederic. He intreats you to hasten to him.

Adelaide.

Adelaide. Begone, begone. (*Throwing herself as exhausted by her emotion on a couch*)

Falkenbelm. I do not say farewell—we meet again!
[*Exit hastily*]

(*Frederic follows him*)

Adelaide. We meet again! I will take care of that. Margaret, (*calling to her attendant*) if he should again seek admittance, say I am sick, asleep, no matter what, so you but deny me. By arts futile as these, Adelbert! is thy inconstant spirit to be fix'd. In chains slender as mine art thou to be bound for ever! [Exit]

AN ANTICHAMBER.

ADELBERT of Falkenbelm, FREDERIC.

Falkenbelm. She refuses to admit me!

Frederic. Night comes on apace, my Lord; shall I faddle the horses?

Falkenbelm. She will not see me—?

Frederic. At what hour would your Lordship choose the horses?

Falkenbelm. It is too late; we must stay here to-night.

Frederic. God be thank'd! [Exit]

Falkenbelm. (*alone*) 'Tis done, and thou remain'st! Adelbert! beware. Thy virtue should be firm, for thy temptation's strong. My horse started as I was about to enter the palace gates. 'Twas my good angel that opposed his passage. He knew the dangers which awaited me here. Yet it were wrong to leave so many affairs of the Bishop's unsettled, at least not to put them in such order, as that my successor may easily begin where I leave off; and all this I may do without injury to Berlingen, or our alliance. That once completed, she shall no longer detain me. Yet it were better I had never return'd! But I will away—to-morrow perhaps—or—the morning after to-morrow. [Exit]

YARTHAUSEN

YARTHAUSEN.—*The Dining Hall.*

GORTZ, SELBITZ, GEORGE.

Selbitz. You find it has turn'd out precisely as I foretold.

Gortz. No! no!

George. Be assured I would not tell you a word more than the truth. I followed exactly your commands; disguis'd myself in the arms and badge of the Bambergers, and that I might earn my hire in my new capacity, I escorted a party of Miltenberg peasants to Bamberg.

Selbitz. In that disguise! You might have paid dear for that.

George. So I considered when the danger was past; but the soldier who pauses to reflect before hand, will never atchieve a great action. On my arrival at Bamberg, I went to the inn, and even there I heard that Falkenheim and the Bishop were reconciled, and that a marriage was expected between Adelbert and the widow of the count of Waldorf.

Gortz. Mere idle talk!

George. I saw her one day as he was leading her into the dining-hall. She is beautiful, by my word, she is most beautiful! we all bow'd as they pass'd. She thank'd us very gracefully. He nodded carelessly, but looked much delighted; and every one exclaimed when they were past, "What a beautiful couple!"

Gortz. All this may be true, and yet—

George. Let me tell you all. I watch'd my opportunity, and one morning while he was at mass, I placed myself on the step below him, and whispered in his ear—'One word of your friend Berlingen.' He started, and I saw the confession of his guilt in his countenance. He had scarce courage to look me in the face; me, who appeared only a poor soldier-boy.

Selbitz. His conscience degraded him far below the level of thy situation.

George. "Art thou of Bamberg?" said he. I bring you

you greetings from the knight of Berlingen, said I, and am come to inquire—"Attend me early to-morrow in my chamber," said he, "we will then speak further on this business."

Gortz. Didst thou go?

George. To be sure I did, and I was kept waiting a long, long time in the anti-chamber, while the filken fools his attendants eyed me before and behind. At last I was admitted. He appeared extremely out of temper, but to that I was indifferent. I approached him, and laid my commission before him. He walked about in a heat, like one who feels himself a coward, and yet endeavours to conceal it under the appearance of passion. He said that he was astonished you should have sent one in so low a station as myself to call him to account. This nettled me, I told him there was but one distinction—the brave man and the rascal; and that I—served Gortz of Berlingen. Then his passion found words; he talked a great deal of unconnected stuff, and concluded by saying, that you had betrayed him into the agreement, without giving him time to consider of it, that he owed you no fealty, was bound to you by no alliance, and that in short, he would have nothing to do with you.

Gortz. Didst thou hear that from his own lips?

George. Nay more—he threatened me—

Gortz. It is enough! He is now lost for ever! sincerity and faith, ye have again deceived me! My poor Maria! how shall I teach thee to support this blow?

Selbitz. I had rather lose my other leg than become such a villain. [*Exeunt.*]

BAMBERG.

ADELAIDE, ADELBERT of Falkenbelm.

Adelaide. I know not how it is, but time begins to hang

hang insupportably heavy upon me ; I cannot converse in your plaintive strain, and I am ashamed any longer to laugh at your melancholy. Oh weariness ! weariness ! thou art more oppressive than an ague-fit—more—

Falkenbelm. Are you then so soon tired of my society ?

Adelaide. It is not of yourself that I complain, but of your melancholy. I would you were where all your wishes so evidently centre, and that we had never detained you.

Falkenbelm. Such is the favor of woman !—with a mother's warmth they first foster our dearest hopes, and then like the inconstant hen forsake the nest, and resign the growing progeny to death and to destruction !

Adelaide. You complain of woman ! with the same justice, the losing gamester bites and stamps the cards which are the innocent cause of his misfortunes. But let me turn your reflections to your own sex ; with what right can you upbraid us with inconstancy, you, who are so seldom what you would be, so rarely or never what you ought to be ? Kings decked out in festal ornaments merely to excite the envy of the gazing crowd ! What would a vassal's wife give to wear upon her neck, those pearls that ornament but the hem of your garment, and which your foot spurns back disdainfully at every step ?

Falkenbelm. You are severe.

Adelaide. It is the very echo of your song. Ere I knew you, Adelbert, I resembled the vassal's wife. I attached a high value to advantages, which on a nearer view, I find confer very little superiority. Report, with a hundred tongues, to speak without a metaphor, had so blazoned your excellencies, that at length it became the first wish of my heart to see this quintessence of the sex, this phoenix, Falkenhelm ! At length my desire was gratified ;—

Falkenbelm. And the phoenix presented itself an ordinary bird.

Adelaide. No, Falkenhelm ! From the first moment I saw you, I felt interested for you.

Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. So it appears.

Adelaide. In truth, it was so :—for you far surpassed all that fame had said in your favor. The many value the mere exterior of desert. As I am never hasty to investigate those characters of which I wish to entertain the highest opinion, I lived for some time in your society, and though I felt that something was wanting, I knew not what it was. At length my eyes were opened. That active spirit, which had given energy and animation to the affairs of a kingdom ; which had never, amid the storm of cabal and politics, lost sight of its own dignity and greatness—I saw now, languid and enervated, scarcely able to support the weight of its own thoughts. That strenuous mind, which had surmounted a thousand obstacles, that rose in its way like mountains piled on each other to the clouds—I beheld now sunk in despondency, yielding unresistingly under the pressure of a trifling calamity. Instead of the hero my glowing imagination had portrayed, a melancholy being presented itself, more pining than a sick poet—more listless than a girl in love—more peevish than an old bachelor. At first I imputed it to the misfortune which had so recently befallen you, and made every excuse for you that my sympathy could suggest. But now, that I observe every day increases your folly, forgive me if I withdraw that favour, which I so inconsiderately conferred. It was on a being of my own fancy that I bestowed it—on a character too opposite to yours, for it to be possible that *you* should ever share it.

Falkenbelm. Let me then go, and yield me to my fortune.

Adelaide. Not till every hope is lost ; till wearied by fruitless exertions I have relinquished every expectation of reclaiming you. Solitude in your situation might be dangerous. Poor man ! you are more restless, more melancholy, than one who has broke his faith to his first love ! But while I deride your dejection I pity your sufferings ; and,
from

from motives of compassion alone, I will never yield you to your fate. Give me your hand then, Adelbert ! Tell me you pardon me the remonstrances, which friendship alone induced me to make you.

Falkenbelm. Oh ! couldst thou love me—couldst thou grant one drop of balm to soothe my ardent passion. Adelaide ! thy reproaches are in the highest degree unjust. Couldst thou but imagine the hundredth part of that anxiety, which has been festering in my breast, thou wouldst not with pleasantry, indifference and contempt, have wounded me in this un pitying manner. Thou smilest ! but to be reconciled to myself after the fatal, the inconsiderate step that I had taken, requires more than *one* day. To strain every nerve against that man whose remembrance I cannot but love ; but honor—

Adelaide. Wonderful man ! who can feel affection for the being on earth whom thou most enviest !

Falkenbelm. The struggle is past ; and to hesitate is no longer possible. He is informed that I again am Falkenhelm, and will see and pursue his advantages against us. Nor have we, Adelaide, been so remiss as you imagine ; our troops are alert and watchful ; our plans have been pursued with vigour ; and the approaching meeting of the Imperial council at Augsburg will probably bring all our projects to ripeness.

Adelaide. Are you not going there immediately ?

Falkenbelm. If I may bear one hope of thy favour away with me ! (*kissing her hand*)

Adelaide. Oh you unbeliever ! ever asking for signs and wonders ! Go, Falkenhelm, complete thy work. Thy interests, the Bishop's, and my own, are so interwoven, that were it only for political reasons—

Falkenbelm. Canst thou treat so lightly a subject that so deeply interests me ?

Adelaide. I do not jest. The proud Duke has seized on my inheritance : thy estates will not remain long unmolested by Berlingen, and if we do not imitate the unanimity of our enemies, and draw the emperor to our side, we are lost.

Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. I feel no anxiety on that account. All the most powerful princes of the empire are of our party. The emperor will soon stand in need of forces against the Turks, and will be ready to grant us support, that he may rely on our assistance in return. What ardour will animate me while I combat against thy enemies, while I wrest thy possessions from an overbearing foe! I long to atchieve some action that may restore me to my own esteem, that may render me worthy of thy favor! What delight would it be to me to bestow peace on the Bishopric, and on all around us—to lay those unquiet heads in Suabia for ever low! *Adelaide!* might I then hope—

Adelaide. One day leads on another, and on fate the future must depend.

Falkenbelm. But may I hope?

Adelaide. (*Laughing*) Oh by all means! by all means! only get you gone.

Falkenbelm. Enchantress!

AN INN.

Peasant's Wedding, Music and Dancing heard within.

*GORTZ of Berlingen, SELBITZ, and an old PEASANT,
(The Father of the Bride) seated at table.*

The Bridegroom comes in to them.

Gortz. You have taken the wisest course possible, in putting an end to the dispute happily and merrily by a wedding.

Father. Better than I could ever have dreamt. To live in peace with my neighbour, and to have a daughter well provided for into the bargain!

Bridegroom. And I to remain in possession of the matter in dispute, and of one of the prettiest girls in the
the

the village besides ! I wish with all my heart you had thought sooner of this agreement.

Selbitz. How long have you been at law about this business ?

Father. About eight years ; (and I would rather have an ague-fit for so long, than begin from the beginning again. You would never believe what a piece a work it is to get a decision out of their great Wigs.) And when one has it, what is one the better for it ? The devil take that Assessor Sapupi for a cursed black Italian !

Bridegroom. Yes, he's a desperate rascal, God knows. I went twice to him.

Father. And I three times. (And at last, my lords, we got a sentence, by which he had as good a right as I, and I as he. So there we stood, not knowing what to do next, like two asses ; till at last the Blessed Virgin put it into my head to give him my daughter, and to make an end of the business.)

Gortz. (*Drinking*) To your future good understanding !

Father. Aye, God grant it ! (But happen what will, I'll never go to law again. What a power of money that does cost ! why every bow a procurator makes must be paid for.)

Selbitz. Are there not yearly Imperial Visitations held here ?

Father. Not that I know of. — How many bright dollars it has cost me ! A shameful cheat !

Gortz. Who do you mean ?

Father. Who but that Assessor Sapupi ? he alone, God forgive him, has plundered me of eighteen florins.

Bridegroom. Who ?

Father. Why, Sapupi, I tell thee.

Gortz. It is infamous.

Father. Yes, I was obliged to pay him twenty down. And as I told them over to him in the magnificent hall of his grand country house, I was ready to burst with grief and vexation. To be sure, there was the house and land, and now I discovered by what means he could afford to pay for them. I stood before him,

him, God knows in what confusion and distress, for I had not one penny remaining to help me on my journey home. At length, I plucked up courage, and ventured to tell him my necessity, and at last when he saw I was almost desperate, he threw me two of my own florins back, and so dispatch'd me.

Bridegroom. Is it possible? Was that really Sapupi?

Father. Yes, Who else? How surprized you look?

Bridegroom. Why that same rascal received fifteen florins from me.

Father. Damned rogue.

Selbitz. Gortz! *We* are stigmatized as robbers!

Father. That was the reason the sentence was so doubtful! The rascal!

Gortz. You must not suffer such villainy to pass unpunished.

Father. What can we do?

Gortz. Set off immediately for Spires. The visitation is now held there. If you lay your case before the court, they must look into it, and will probably assist you to recover your money.

Bridegroom. Do you think we shall be able to get it out of the rascal?

Gortz. Why I think you would, if I was near his elbow.

Selbitz. The sum is at least worth trying for.

Gortz. Yes, I have taken up arms before now, to recover but a quarter of it for a poor man.

Father. (*To the Bridegroom*) What dost thou think?

Bridegroom. We can but try.

Enter George.

George. My Lord, the Nurembergers are on their march.

Gortz. Where are they.

George. If we ride moderately we shall just meet them, in the wood between Berheim and Millswater.

Selbitz. An excellent spot!

Gortz. Let's away! my children! God keep you, friends! and help us all to our own!

Peasants.

Peasants. Many thanks my Lord! Won't you stay and sup with us?

Gortz. We cannot possibly. Farewell!

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

AUGSBURG.—*A Garden.*

Two TRADESMEN of Nuremberg.

1st Tradesman. WE will post ourselves here. The Emperor must pass this way. He is now coming up the long avenue yonder.

2nd Tradesman. Who is that with him?

1st Tradesman. Adelbert of Falkenheim.

2nd Tradesman. A friend to Bamberg! that is fortunate.

1st Tradesman. We must prostrate ourselves at his feet. I will address him.

2nd Tradesman. Very well. Here they come.

1st Tradesman. He looks very much out of temper.

Enter the Emperor, and Adelbert of Falkenheim.

Emperor. I am discontented, Falkenheim, I could almost despair, when I look back on the transactions of my past life; when I recollect how many plans have been left imperfect, how many have totally failed; and that merely from a want of unanimity in my subjects: since there is not a prince of the realm, however petty, and however insignificant, who is not more intent on
F
executing

executing his own whims, than on satisfying my desires.

[*The Tradesmen prostrate themselves before him.*]

1st Tradesman. Most gracious Sovereign. High and mighty Prince!

Emperor. Who are you? What is your petition?

1st Tradesman. We are your Majesty's most humble vassals, and poor tradesmen dwelling at Nuremberg. We entreat your Majesty's protection against Gortz of Berlingen, and Hans of Selbitz, who have attacked and plundered thirty of us as we were returning from the mart at Frankfort, accompanied by an escort granted us by the Bishop of Bamberg. We implore your Imperial Majesty to afford us your most gracious help and assistance, without which we shall be totally ruined, and reduced to the necessity of begging our bread.

Emperor. (*Peevishly*) Thus am I eternally pestered by complaints and petitions! What's to be done in all this? Of the men you accuse, one has lost his leg, and the other has lost his hand. If they had both their legs, and both their arms, what in the world would become of you?

1st Tradesman. We humbly entreat your Majesty to look with a merciful eye on our oppressed circumstances.

Emperor. What's to be done? Because a tradesman loses a bag of pepper, am I to beat the whole empire to arms? Though I daily experience, that when disputes arise which concern the whole state, and our Imperial Majesty itself, which involve both kingdoms and provinces—all the world cannot then rouse you to exert yourselves in the cause.

Falkenbelm. You have addressed yourselves to his Majesty at an unreasonable time. Go, abide a few days in the town, and await his sovereign pleasure with regard to you.

Tradesmen. We humbly recommend ourselves to your lordship.

[*Exeunt*]

Emperor.

Emperor. Ever new contentions ! They grow like the heads of the Hydra.

Falkenbelm. And are not to be extirpated but by the same methods ; by fire and sword. The most decisive and most vigorous measures are alone efficacious in such extremities.

Emperor. Dost thou imagine that by such means it would be possible to put an end to these factions ?

Falkenbelm. I cannot imagine any thing more easy ; If your Majesty would only consent to bury in oblivion those trifling divisions which have arisen between you and the state princes. It is by no means all Germany that sickens under the influence of faction ; in Franconia and Suabia alone, the sparks of civil discord yet glimmer : and even there, most of the knights and noblemen are anxious and impatient for peace. If your Majesty would only be persuaded to make examples of those who are most conspicuously turbulent, such as Sickingen, Selbitz, and---and---(*confused and hesitating*) Berlingen ; the rest would, of themselves, fall away, and be forgotten ; for it is only these, whose proud undaunted spirits give force and animation to the rebellious crowd.

Emperor. It is these men, above all others, whom I am inclined to spare. They are among the noblest, and most valiant of my subjects, and were I engaged in an active war to-morrow, it is on them that I should bestow the command of my forces, with most confidence, and with most satisfaction.

Falkenbelm. It were well they had learned to obey, before your Majesty thought of investing them with command. Is it possible that you could ever have entertained the dangerous idea of rewarding their rebellious attempts with the highest dignities in your army ? It is this mistaken lenity, this amiable mildness in your Majesty's character, on which they depend with so much confidence for impunity, of which they take such infamous advantage ; nor will they ever set bounds to their towering hopes, or curb in their restless ambition, 'till before the eyes of the whole world, you have levelled

led them with the dust, and deprived them of every chance of ever rising again.

Emperor. You advise me then to employ the severest means?

Falkenbelm. I can imagine no other method of exterminating at once that spirit of innovation which has lately been manifested in the whole country. Every day, the nobles are complaining, that their vassals threaten to throw off their long accustomed subjection; that they reason with them, murmur against their commands, and dare to dispute their hereditary and absolute authority. The most dangerous consequences are to be apprehended from such incroachments.

Emperor. The present would be a good opportunity of checking the ambition of Selbitz and of Berlingen, but I am determined that they shall by no means suffer any injury. I would have them made prisoners, and then bound by their allegiance to remain peaceably at their castles, and within the limits of their own domains. I think, I will lay this plan before the council assembled at Augsburg.

Falkenbelm. The proposal would be received with such a tumult of applause, as would spare your Majesty the trouble of concluding your speech.

[*Exeunt*]

YARTHAUSEN.

GORTZ of Berlingen, FRANCIS of Sickingen.

Sickingen. Yes, I am come to demand the heart and hand of your noble sister.

Gortz. I wish you had arrived earlier then, for I will not conceal from you, that Falkenhelm, during the time he was my prisoner, gained her affections, and that I even gave my consent when he solicited her in marriage.

marriage. But I have restored the bird to his liberty, and now he despises the benevolent hand that fed him in the day of his necessity, and heaven knows where he roves to seek his sustenance.

Sickingen. Is it possible?

Gortz. 'Tis exactly as I tell you.

Sickingen. He has torn asunder a double bond! You are fortunate in having escaped an alliance with such a traitor.

Gortz. The poor maiden sits there, pale, and melancholy, and consumes her life in prayers and tears.

Sickingen. We will restore her cheerfulness.

Gortz. What? Is it possible, you can resolve upon a marriage with one who is rejected and forsaken!

Sickingen. It is an honor to both your hearts to have been deceived by such a traitor! But shall the poor maiden pine her life away in a cloister, because the first man she became acquainted with proved a villain? Oh! No! I remain by my resolution, she shall be queen of my castles.

Gortz. But I have told you, she was even attached to him.

Sickingen. Hast thou so poor an opinion of thy friend as to imagine he cannot chace away the shadow of a rascal? Come, come; let me see her.

[*Exeunt.*]

CAMP OF THE TROOPS OF THE EMPIRE,

GENERAL—KNIGHTS.

General. We must proceed with the greatest caution, and spare our people as much as possible; our orders are limited to surrounding him and making him a prisoner. This will be no easy matter—which of us will venture to lay hands on him?

1st. Knight. Which of us indeed! he will defend himself like a wild boar. Besides, he never injured any
one

one of us: and every man will be willing to wave the honor of venturing his life, (his limbs at least) in the attempt to seize him, merely to gratify the will and pleasure of his majesty and the state.

2d. Knight. 'Twere a shame he should escape us! If I once get hold of him he shall not free himself in a hurry.

1st. Knight. Only let me advise you, do not seize him with your teeth, for he may chance to draw out your jaw-bones. Let me tell you, my young sir, men of his character are not to be treated like run-away thieves.

2d. Knight. we shall see.

General. By this time, he has received our summons. We will send out a party to watch his motions.

2d. Knight. Permit me to command it.

General. You are ignorant of the country.

2d Knight. But I have a soldier that was born and bred there.

General. I am content.

[*Exeunt.*]

YARTHAUSEN.

Sickingen. (Alone) It succeeds to my utmost wishes: she was astonished at my proposal, and considered me from head to foot. I suppose she was comparing me with her perfumed Adelbert. God be thanked, I dare stand the comparison; she answered little, and with extreme confusion; so much the better—it may digest a while. To maidens who have once smarted under a disappointments in love, a proposal of marriage becomes very soon acceptable. (*Enter Gortz*) How now, brother?

Gortz. Proscribed! excommunicated!

Sickingen. What do you mean?

Gortz. (Giving a paper) Read there the exemplary decree. The ban of the empire is pronounced against me: my Sovereign bestows my flesh as a feast on the birds of the air or the beasts of the field!

Sickingen. Rather let him become their prey! How fortunate that I am with you at this moment!

Gortz.

Gortz. No, Sickingen! you shall away. All your great plans would fall to the ground, were you at such a moment to declare yourself an enemy to the empire. And even to me, your preserving an appearance of neutrality, may in the end be of greater service. The Emperor loves you, and the worst that can happen to me is to be made a prisoner. Then exert your influence, then rescue me from that misery in which your untimely assistance might involve us both. For what would it avail? the troops are now on their march to attack me, were they to hear that thou art with me, they would only strengthen their force, and we should be in nothing the better. The Emperor sits at the fountain's head, and can with ease pour down torrents to overwhelm me. I were lost indeed, if it were in his power to collect courage and magnanimity, with the facility with which he can assemble armies and vassals.

Sickingen. I may at least reinforce thee secretly by a body of horsemen.

Gortz. Be it so. I have already dispatch'd George to Selbitz, and my vassals to the neighbourhood around. Dear brother, when my people are collected, I shall possess a little army, such as few princes can command.

Sickingen. But you still forget the multitude you have to oppose.

Gortz. One wolf is too much for a whole herd of sheep.

Sickingen. But suppose they possess a good shepherd?

Gortz. Oh! content thee, I know he is a hireling; and even the bravest knight can do little, if he is fetter'd by regulations, and not allow'd to remain master of his own actions. I remember well, when I had promised the Pfalzgrave to march against his enemy Conrad of Shottenberg, he brought me a long list of orders from the council; as, how I was to attack, how I was to defend, and how—but I threw them back into his hands, and told him plainly that I did not know how to promise obedience to these directions, since I could not foretel how they might tally with events; and that I could

could not answer for the success of any undertaking in which I was not allowed the liberty of using my own eyes, and my own judgment.

Sickingen. Well, success attend thee, dear brother! I will away, and dispatch to thee what forces I can collect in haste.

Gortz. Go once more to the women: I left them together. I would thou hadst Maria's promise before thou leavest us. Then send me the horsemen, and return secretly thyself to fetch away thy bride; for my castle, I fear, will be no longer an abode for women.

Sickingen. We will hope the best.

[*Exeunt.*]

BAMBERG.—*Adelaide's Apartment.*

ADELAIDE. FREDERIC.

Adelaide. Both the proscriptions are then already declared?

Frederic. Yes; and my Lord has the happiness of marching against your enemies; I longed to accompany him, in spite of the delight I ever feel in the expectation of seeing you. I will now away, soon to return to you with joyful tidings. My Lord has promised I shall be his messenger.

Adelaide. How is it with him?

Frederic. He is in high spirits. He commanded me to kiss your hand.

Adelaide. (*Presenting it*) Here!—Thy lips are warm.

Frederic. (*Aside, laying his hand on his breast*) But my heart still more glowing! (*to her*) Gracious lady, your servants are the happiest of mortals!—

Adelaide. Who commands against Berlingen?

Frederic. The Knight of Sirau. Farewell! gracious lady, I will away—do not forget me,

Adelaide.

Adelaide. Oh stay! take some refreshment and repose.

Frederic. It is unnecessary: I have seen you, and I am no longer either wearied or hungry.

Adelaide. I know thy fidelity and zeal—

Frederic. Ah! gracious lady.

Adelaide. But thy strength can never hold out against such fatigue. Rest thee, and take some refreshment.

Frederic. (*With great emotion*) Your solicitude for a poor youth who— [Exit]

Adelaide. (*Alone*) Tears rushed into his eyes! I love him from my heart! so ardently, so excessively, was no one ever attached to me. [Exit]

YARTHAUSEN.

GORTZ, GEORGE.

George. He insists upon speaking with yourself. I do not know him. He is a tall majestic looking man, with dark fiery eyes.

Gortz. Let him come in.

Enter Francis Lersen.

Gortz. God keep you! What do you bring?

Lersen. Myself. That is not much, but all it is I offer to your service.

Gortz. You are welcome as a brave man; and doubly welcome at this hour, when I could not hope to acquire new friends, but feared daily the loss of my oldest ones. Your name?

Lersen. Francis Lersen.

Gortz. I thank you, Francis, for having made me acquainted with a brave man.

Lersen. I introduced myself to you once before; and yet, as I remember, on that occasion you were not so grateful.

Gortz.

Gortz. It is strange that I do not recollect you.

Lersen. I should be sorry you did. Do you remember when you commanded that expedition against the Pfalsgrave's enemy, Conrade of Shottenberg, and attempted to surprize Hartzfurt one Shrove-Tuesday.

Gortz. Perfectly well.

Lersen. Do you recollect meeting on your way near the village of Remlin a troop of about five and twenty horsemen?

Gortz. Yes, perfectly. I thought at first there had only been about twelve of them; and dividing my little party which consisted of sixteen, I stationed myself with one half behind a barn near the village, expecting the enemy to pass us; and intending then to attack them, as I had agreed with my other division.

Lersen. But we were aware of you, and took possession of a little height near the village. You advanced, and halted close below us. As we saw you were determined not to come up, we were obliged at length to ride down upon you.

Gortz. Then I discovered that I had put my hand into the fire. Five and twenty against eight of us! that was fearful odds! Everhard Trellert killed one of my vassals close by my side; and in return I bore him from his horse. Had they all fought as bravely as he, and one other soldier, it had gone hard with me and my little troop.

Lersen. Who was that other soldier?

Gortz. The noblest fellow I ever met with. He pressed me closely: when I imagined I had freed myself from him, and attempted to engage some other opponent, he always returned with fresh vigour to the charge, and attacked me with desperate valour. He did indeed give me a stroke across the shoulder that cut through my armour, and wounded me slightly.

Lersen. Have you forgiven him?

Gortz. I admired his courage too much to preserve the slightest resentment.

Lersen. I may then hope you will be satisfied with me,

me, since the trial of my strength was made upon yourself.

Gortz. (*With great animation*) Art thou he! Oh welcome! a thousand times welcome! Canst thou, Maximillian! amid all thy vassals boast of one thus gained?

Lersen. I wonder you did not recollect me before.

Gortz. How could it occur to me, that he who now offered me his services, was the very man who once so strenuously opposed me?

Lersen. It is even so, my Lord. From my earliest youth I have been a soldier, and have served under many knights. I rejoiced when we encountered you: your name was before familiar to me, but at Remlin I first learnt to know yourself. I could not indeed stand my ground against you, but you were convinced it was not fear made me yield, since I return'd continually to the attack. In short, I learnt to know you. From that hour, I resolved to serve under you.

Gortz. How long will you remain with me.

Lersen. A year, and without hire or reward.

Gortz. No! you shall be considered as the rest; and distinguished as the man who so gallantly opposed me before Remlin.

Enter George.

George. Hans of Selbitz greets you: by morning he will be here with fifty men.

Gortz. 'Tis well.

George. A troop of Imperialists are winding down the hill. They come to observe our motions, I believe.

Gortz. How strong are they?

George. About fifty.

Gortz. Is that all? Come away Lersen! let us drive them before us, that when Selbitz arrives he may find a piece of work done to his hands.

Lersen. 'Twill make a famous preface.

Gortz. To horse! to horse!

[*Exeunt*]

▲

A FOREST AND MORASS.

Two SOLDIERS of the IMPERIAL party meeting.

1st Soldier. What? is thy troop so near?

2d Soldier. About three miles up the wood.

1st Soldier. Whither art thou running then?

2d Soldier. I intreat thee do not betray me. I have been very ill, and all in a shiver, ever since that furious sudden attack last night, and am only going as far as the next village to see if I can get something to do me good. How camst thou here?

1st Soldier. Why I have been at the next village too, to fetch provisions and wine for our officers.

2d Soldier. Yes, yes, they pamper themselves before our very eyes, while we are obliged to fast. A pretty example they set us, truly.

1st Soldier. Come back with me, you rascal!

2d Soldier. Who would be the fool then? there are plenty among our troops who would not mind fasting, so they could get as far off as I am. (*tumult without*)

1st Soldier. Hark! hark! the galloping of horses.

2d Soldier. Lord help us! what will become of us?

1st Soldier. I will climb this tree.

2d Soldier. I will hide myself among the reeds.

Enter Gortz, Lersen, George, and Soldiers on horseback.

Gortz. (*Speaking as he enters*) Here, past this pond, and by the left hand into the wood. Thus we may fall upon their rear. [*They pass and Exit*]

1st Soldier. (*Coming down from the tree*) There will be warm work yonder; one's as well out of the way of it. Michael! (*calling to his companion*) he does not answer. Why Michael! (*calling*) they are gone, I tell thee. (*He goes towards the pond*) Michael! Oh Jesu Maria! he has funk. Michael! He hears me not, he is drown'd—art thou gone, old boy—(*trampling of horses, tumult without*) we are defeated! the enemy! the enemy pours upon us from all quarters—

Enter

Enter Gortz and George on horseback.

Gortz. Stand fellow, or thou diest.

Soldier. Spare my life.

Gortz. Give up thy sword. George, conduct him to the rest of the prisoners, whom Lersen is keeping guard over in the wood. I must pursue their flying leaders. [Exit]

Soldier. What is become of our Commander?

George. Why, my Lord threw him topsy-turvy from his horse, and with such force that the very plume of his helmet stuck in the dirt. His soldiers lifted him upon his steed again, and away they all galloped as if they had been possess'd. [Exeunt]

CAMP.

GENERAL, 1st KNIGHT.

1st Knight. They fly from all quarters towards the camp.

General. He will be close upon their heels. Order a detachment of about fifty to station themselves near the mills yonder: if he pursues the fugitives too far, perhaps they may be able to intercept his retreat.

Enter 2d Knight, supported by his Soldiers.

1st Knight. How now, my young Lord? are you returned crest-fallen?

2d Knight. Plague take him! The strongest armour must have shivered like glass at such a shock. What a devil in arms he is! He fell upon me with such a force, that I felt as if I had been beat down by thunder to the earth.

General. You may thank God that you ever escaped with life from his hands.

2d Knight. (*Very angrily*) Am I to thank God that
two

two of my ribs are broken? Where is the surgeon?
[*Exeunt*]

YARTHAUSEN.

GORTZ, HANS of SELBITZ.

Gortz. What say'st thou to our being thus proscribed, Selbitz?

Selbitz. I say it is Falkenheim's doing.

Gortz. Canst thou think so? (*Anxiously*)

Selbitz. I do not think so. I am convinced of it.

Gortz. How so?

Selbitz. He was at the Diet, I tell thee. He was with the Emperor.

Gortz. Well! well! We shall defeat a second of his plans then.

Selbitz. I hope so.

Gortz. Let us away! and continue our hare-hunt.

[*Exeunt*]

CAMP.

GENERAL, KNIGHTS.

General. We obtain not the slightest advantage, my Lords. He defeats our troops detachment after detachment; and those who are not killed or taken prisoners in the action, would rather run as far as Turkey, than return to our camp, with the chance of ever facing him again. Thus we become every day weaker. We must strike one desperate blow, and attack him in full force. I will myself command the expedition; and he shall find with whom he has to deal.

2d Knight. We are all contented you should. Only you may be assured, that he is so perfectly acquainted with
with

with the country, knows so accurately every path and winding among the hills; that he is as little to be caught in this place as a mouse in a granary.

General. Oh! we shall soon be able to overpower him. Let us away to Yarthausen. Will he, or will he not, he must follow to defend his own castle.

1st Knight. Shall we march our whole force there?

General. Certainly. Do you not know that a hundred of us are wasted away already?

2d Knight. Therefore let us away, before the whole snow-ball thaws. It is hot in this neighbourhood, and we melt like butter in the sun.

HILL AND WOOD.

GORTZ, SELBITZ, LERSEN, GEORGE, SOLDIERS.

Gortz. They are coming down upon us in full force. It was high time Sickingen's horsemen arrived to reinforce us.

Selbitz. Let us divide our troops. I will take the left hand, and march round the hill.

Gortz. Good. And do thou, Francis, lead on fifty through the wood on the right. They are advancing over the heath. I'll post myself to meet them. George, thou remain'st with me! And do you, Selbitz and Lersen, when you see them attack me, fall impetuously upon them from both sides. We'll trample them to the earth. They do not even imagine that we dare face them. [Exeunt]

HEATH.

On one side a Hill, on the other a Wood.

GENERAL, TROOPS.

General. He keeps his station on the heath! what arrogance!

arrogance ! Does he not even fear the storm that we have let loose upon him ?

Knight. I would not on any account that you should ride in the front of the line. He looks exactly as if he would plant the first man that should meddle with him head-foremost in the earth. Take a less distinguished station ; let me advise you.

General. Not I.

Knight. I pray you do ; you are the tie that holds together this bundle of willow-twigs, that once unloosed, he will snap them one after the other like so many rushes.

General. Sound the charge, trumpeter ! A breath will scatter them. [*Exeunt*]

Selbitz. (*Rushing from behind the hill in full gallop*) Follow me ! follow me ! (*passes and exit*)

Lersen. (*From the wood*) Fly to Gortz's assistance ! Fly ! He is almost surrounded. Brave Selbitz ! thou hast already cut thy way to him. We'll sow the heath with their thistle-heads. (*passes and exit*)

[*Tumult and fight.*]

A HILL WITH A WATCH TOWER.

SELBITZ, wounded and supported by his SOLDIERS.

Selbitz. Lay me down here, and return instantly to Gortz.

1st Soldier. Suffer us to remain with you, my Lord : you need our assistance.

Selbitz. Ascend one of you up into the Watch-tower, and see how the battle fares.

1st Soldier. How shall I get up ?

2d Soldier. Raise thyself upon my shoulders ; thou wilt then be able to reach the loop-holes, and so scramble up to the opening.

1st Soldier. (*Getting up*) Oh my Lord !—

Selbitz.

Selbitz. What dost thou see?

1st Soldier. Your troops fly towards the hill.

Selbitz. Infernal cowards! So they but stood their ground, I care not if a bullet whizzed through my brain. Away! gallop after them, and drive them back with curses! (*Exit 2d Soldier*) Dost thou see Gortz?

1st Soldier. I distinguish his three black plumes in the very thickest of the battle.

Selbitz. God support thee, fortunate, noble friend! And I lie here!

1st Soldier. A white plume! whose is that?

Selbitz. The General's.

1st Soldier. Gortz presses upon him. He falls! he falls!

Selbitz. The General?

1st Soldier. Yes.

Selbitz. Thank God! thank God!

1st Soldier. Oh God! I can no longer see Gortz.

Selbitz. Die then, Selbitz!

1st Soldier. A horrible tumult where he stood! George's blue tuft is vanished also.

Selbitz. Come down. Dost thou see Lersen?

1st Soldier. No. There is nothing but confusion and tumult.

Selbitz. No more. Come down, I say! How do Sickingen's horsemen stand?

1st Soldier. Firmly. A trooper flies towards the wood—Another!—A whole troop—Gortz is no more!

Selbitz. Come down!

1st Soldier. Huzza! huzza! I see Gortz! I see George.

Selbitz. On horse!

1st Soldier. High on horse! Victory! victory! They fly! they fly!

Selbitz. The Imperialists?

1st Soldier. The standards in the midst of them!—Gortz close behind them—they disperse—Gortz presses after the standards—he seizes them—he waves them!—a handful of men support him. My comrade has reached him—they're marching up here.

G

Gortz.

Gortz, George, Lersen, Soldiers.

Selbitz. Joy to you! Gortz! Victory! victory!

Gortz. (*Alighting from his horse*) Dearly, dearly purchased. Thou art wounded, Selbitz?

Selbitz. Thou livest! and art victorious! I have done little—and those cowardly villains my soldiers. How didst thou ever escape?

Gortz. We have fought hard for it. And here, to you, George, and to you Lersen, let me return thanks for the life you have saved. I had thrown the General from his horse; My charger had been killed under me, and the enemy pressed with fury upon me. George saw my danger, and dismounted instantly. Like lightning I sprang upon his horse, and with the swiftness that thunder follows the flash, he was mounted again. How cam'st thou by another steed so soon?

George. I plunged my dagger into the very vitals of one who was raising his arm to cut you down. His armour was drawn up by the violent effort he made, and his body left defenceless to the blow. He staggered and fell; and thus I helped you from an enemy, and myself to a horse.

Gortz. We stood our ground as if we had been planted in it, till we saw Francis forcing his way thro' to our assistance, and then we *mowed* our way out from the very centre of them.

Lersen. Those cowards I commanded ought to have *mowed* their way in, until our scythes had met; but they fled like Imperial troops.

Gortz. Both friends and foes consulted their safety by flight. This little troop alone, (*Pointing to those that surround him*) stood their ground proudly, and defended me from behind. I had enough to do with the rascals who pressed me in front. The fall of their General helped to shake their courage, and they fled. I have got their standards and a few prisoners.

Selbitz. Has the general escaped you?

Gortz. They rescued him in the meantime. Come my boys! Come Selbitz. Make a litter of boughs to carry him

him on. Thou canst not mount thy horse. Let us away to my castle. They are dispersed, but our forces are small, and I fear they may have troops in reserve to send after us. I will be your host; my friends, our wine will taste the sweeter after such a storm.

[*Exeunt*]

CAMP.

GENERAL, SOLDIERS, &c.

General. I could strangle you all with my own hands! To fly! when he had scarcely a handful of men to oppose you. To fly! before one single man! There are none that will believe it; none;—except those who wish to make a joke of us. Scour the country round, you—and you—and you. Wherever you find any of our dastardly soldiers, bring them back, or shoot them on the spot. We must wipe off this blot from our characters, though we should perish in the attempt.

YARTHAUSEN.

GORTZ, LERSEN, GEORGE.

Gortz. We must not lose an instant: my poor fellows I dare not allow you any rest! Scour the country round, and endeavour to collect me fresh soldiers. Order them all to hasten to Weilern; they will there be most secure. If we delay, my castle will be surrounded. [*Exeunt Lersen and George*] I must send out a party to observe their motions. It begins to be hot work, and if they were as brave as they are powerful—

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but

but as it is, it is only against numbers we have to contend. [Exit]

Enter Sickingen and Maria.

Maria. I intreat you, dearest Sickingen, do not forsake my brother. His troops and those with which you and Selbitz had reinforced him, are dispersed; Selbitz is carried mortally wounded to his castle; and alone and defenceless against such multitudes, I tremble at the danger to which my brother is exposed.

Sickingen. Be not alarmed, I will not leave him.

Enter Gortz.

Gortz. I come to conduct you to the chapel. The priest awaits you: in a quarter of an hour you will be united for ever.

Sickingen. You will suffer me then to remain with you?

Gortz. You shall now to the chapel.

Sickingen. Most willingly—and afterwards?

Gortz. Afterwards you shall return to your own home.

Sickingen. Gortz!

Gortz. Will you not to the chapel?

Sickingen. Come, let us away! [Exeunt]

CAMP.

GENERAL, KNIGHTS.

General. How strong are we in all?

Knight. About a hundred and fifty.

General. All that remains of four hundred! It is insupportable to be thus baffled. Let us away to Yarthausen, and attack him before he has had time to collect new forces to oppose us. [Exeunt]

YARTHAUSEN.

YARTHAUSEN.

GORTZ, ELIZABETH, MARIA, SICKINGEN.

Gortz. God blefs you! and grant you many happy days: and may he add all thofe bleffings he denies to you, to your children's ftore!

Elizabeth. And grant they be, as you are, virtuous! and for the reft, you need form no prayers.

Sickingen. I thank you; and thank you, Maria! I have led you to the altar, and you fhall conduct me to happinefs.

Maria. We will together make a pilgrimage to that diftant promifed land.

Gortz. A pleafant journey to you!

Maria. That is not my meaning, brother. We will not leave you

Gortz. You muft, fifter.

Maria. You are very cruel, brother.

Gortz. And you more affectionate than prudent, Maria.

Enter George.

George. (*Afide to Gortz*) I cannot collect any fresh foldiers; the few that were at firft inclined to ferve, foon changed their minds, and refufed to accompany me.

Gortz. (*Afide to George*) 'Tis well, George. [*Exit George*] Fortune begins to forfake me; but I forefaw, and was prepared for a reverfe. (*Aloud*) Sickingen! I entreat you, depart this very evening. Perfuate Maria to agree to it. She is your wife, and let her feel your power. When women interfere in our undertakings, our enemies are as fafe in the open field as in a citadel.

Enter a Soldier.

Soldier. My Lord, the Imperial troops are on their march;

march; they come directly upon us and advance rapidly.

Gortz. What, have I at length roused their courage? How strong are they?

Soldier. About two hundred. They are by this time within two leagues of us.

Gortz. What, have they crossed the river?

Soldier. Yes, my Lord.

Gortz. Could I command but fifty men in the world, they never had advanced thus far to meet me! Hast thou seen Lersen?

Soldier. No, my Lord.

Gortz. Tell them all to be prepared. (*Exit Soldier*) It must be decided, my best beloved. Indulge thy tears, Maria, the moment will come when thou shalt rejoice. Better thou shouldst weep on thy marriage day, than that an excess of joy now, should be the herald of future misery. Farewell, Maria! Farewell, Sickingen!

Maria. (*Weeping on Elizabeth's neck*) I cannot leave you, sister! Dear brother, suffer us to stay! Hast thou so poor an opinion of my husband, as to reject his assistance in a moment of such extremity?

Gortz. My career is far advanced: perhaps my fall is nigh. You are but beginning to live, and shall I involve you in my fate? I have ordered your horses to be saddled. You must immediately away.

Maria. Brother! dear brother!

Elizabeth. (*Aside to Sickingen*) Yield to him! Depart.

Sickingen. Dear Maria! Let us begone.

Maria. And thou too? I shall break my heart.

Gortz. Remain then; in a few hours my castle will be surrounded.

Maria. (*Wildly wringing her hands*) Oh God! Oh God!

Gortz. We will defend ourselves to the very utmost.

Maria. Blessed virgin! have mercy on us!

Gortz. And, in the end, we can surrender or perish. Thy weak tears will have involved thy noble husband in my fate.

Maria.

Maria. Thou torturest me.

Gortz. Oh remain! remain! We shall together be made prisoners. Thou, Sickingen, wilt fall with me into the gulph, from which I hoped thou wouldst have delivered me.

Maria. We will away! we will away! sister! dearest sister!

Gortz. (*To Sickingen*) Lodge her in a place of security, and then remember me?

Sickingen. I will never taste rest, till I have delivered you from danger.

Gortz. Sister! beloved Maria! (*embracing her*)

Sickingen. Away! away!

Gortz. One moment longer. (*Pause*) But I shall see thee again.—Console thyself—we shall meet again.

[*Exeunt Maria and Sickingen*]

Gortz. I drive her from me, and at the instant she departs I would detain her. Thou wilt not leave me Elizabeth!

Elizabeth. Death shall not divide us! [*Exit*]

Gortz. (*With great emotion*) On him only whom he loves, God bestows such a wife!

Enter George.

George. They are advancing rapidly. I discovered them plainly from the tower; as the sun broke forth, it glittered on their pikes. As I looked at them, I felt no more afraid than a cat does before an army of mice.

Gortz. Look to the door bolts. See that the gates are firmly barricadoed, and rammed on the inside with beams and stones. [*Exit George*] We'll mock their patience to scorn: and as to their courage, they may digest it at their leisure. (*Herald's trumpet heard without*) Ha! ha! a red-coated rascal, who is come to enquire of us, whether we will brand ourselves for ever as cowards or not. (*He goes to the window*) Your business, friend?

(*Speaking is heard at a distance*)

Gortz. (*Aside*) I would I had a rope round thy neck.

Herald

Herald continues.

Gortz. A traitor to majesty! This summons has been indicted by a priest.

Herald concludes.

Gortz. (*Answering him*) Yield myself a prisoner! Surrender at discretion! To whom do you speak? Am I a robber? Tell your commander that for my Sovereign, I have, as ever, all due respect and submission; but that for him—tell him he may—(*Dashes to the casement*) [Exit]

THE SIEGE.

The Store-room, in which ELIZABETH is busily employed.
GORTZ comes in to her.

Gortz. Thou hast a great deal of fatigue, dear wife!

Elizabeth. I wish I may long be so employed; but I fear me, we shall scarcely be able to hold out much longer.

Gortz. We had not time to lay in stores beforehand.

Elizabeth. And the number of people we have had to supply with provisions;—The wine too, begins already to run scant.

Gortz. If we can only hold out till they propose terms. We injure them most materially; while they are firing all day, and merely wound our walls, or smash our window panes. That Lersen is a brave fellow! He steals about with his musket, and if one of them ventures too near, bounce! he lays him low in a moment.

Enter a Soldier.

Soldier. Coals are wanting, madam.

Gortz. What is to be done now?

Soldier. The bullets are all spent, and we are going to melt fresh ones.

Gortz. How does the powder hold out?

Soldier.

Soldier. Pretty well. We are as sparing of our shot as possible.

THE HALL OF THE CASTLE.

LERSEN, with a mould &c. for making bullets. A SOLDIER enters with coals.

Lersen. So, set them down there, and look about the house for lead; in the mean time I will make a beginning here. (*Taking out a window and breaking the panes*) All advantages are fair. So it happens in this world; no man knows to what uses things may come. The glazier who fix'd in these panes, certainly never imagined that the lead of them might give an incurable head-ache to one of his grand-children; and my father when he made me, little considered, what bird of the air, or what worm of the earth might devour me.

Enter George with a leaden spout off the roof.

George. There is lead in plenty for thee. If only half of it hits, so shall not one of these fellows escape to say "An' please your majesty, we made a pitiful stand."

Lersen. (*Cutting off some of it*) A noble piece indeed!

George. The rain may now seek out a new channel for itself. I am not uneasy on its account. A brave soldier and a downright heavy shower will make their way through most impediments.

Lersen. (*Melting and pouring out the lead*) Take hold of the ladle. (*Going to the window*) I see one of those fellows taking aim. They dare come near us now; they think we have spent all our shot; he shall taste this bullet, hot and fresh as it comes from the pan. (*Loading*)

George. (*Leaning on the ladle*) Let us see, now.

Lersen

Lersen. (*Fires*) There lies the sparrow!

George. He shot at me a minute or two ago, as I was getting on the roof to fetch the pipe. He kill'd a pidgeon that was perch'd at a little distance from me, which fell into the spout. (*Pouring into the mould*) I thank'd him for my dinner, and descended in triumph with my double booty.

Lersen. Now let us provide ourselves with plenty of shot, and take a circuit round the castle, that we may earn our dinner by the time it is ready.

Enter Gortz.

Gortz. Stay *Lersen*, I have something to consult thee on. Thee, *George*, I need not detain.

[*Exit George*]

Gortz. They offer to treat with me.

Lersen. I will go out to them and hear what they have to propose.

Gortz. I know what it will be. They will bind me by my oath to remain under honourable arrest.

Lersen. That won't do. Suppose you were to stipulate for a free retreat, since you have lost all hopes of succour from *Sickingen*? We will bury our gold and silver deeper than any of their plummets can sound it, yield up the castle to them, and march out with the honours of war.

Gortz. They will never agree to such terms.

Lersen. We can but try.

A HALL IN THE CASTLE.

GORTZ, ELIZABETH, GEORGE, SOLDIERS—all
seated at table.

Gortz. Thus danger binds us closer to each other! be of good cheer my friends, and do not forget to fill your glasses. The flask is empty—fetch another, dear wife.

wife. (*Elizabeth shakes her head*) What, is it all gone?

Elizabeth. (*Whispering to him*) There is only one remaining, and I have set it apart for thee.

Gortz. Not so my love—give it out; they need support, not I. 'Tis my own cause which I defend.

Elizabeth. Fetch it from the closet.

Gortz. It is the last, but I feel a presentiment that we need not be sparing of it. It is long since I have felt so contented, so happy. (*Filling his glass*) Long live the Emperor! (*All repeat, Long live the Emperor*) And be this the last sentiment, except one, which in the hour of death our tongues shall utter. I love him! for his fate resembles mine; yet am I still happier than he is; he is obliged to punish the poor mice of the state, while he is conscious that 'tis the rats who gnaw and consume his revenues. I know he has often wished that he were dead, rather than longer be the soul of such a crippled body. (*Filling out*) It will just go once more round: and when that tide is ebbing fast away, whose current no returning flow shall again reanimate; when our life's blood begins to fail, and like the wine in this flask, at first flows slowly, then languidly, and at length drop-by-drop, drop-by-drop, (*dropping slowly the last drainings into his glass*) what shall then be the last words our tongues shall utter, the last sentiment our hearts shall form?

George. Liberty! Liberty!

Gortz. Liberty for ever!

All. Liberty! Liberty for ever!

Gortz. If Liberty survives us, we may close our eyes in peace; for from a better world we shall witness our children's prosperity, and the happiness of our children's sovereign. When vassals serve their Prince as faithfully and as independently as you serve me; when Princes serve their Emperor as—I would wish to serve mine—

George. (*Interrupting*) Great changes must take place before that time arrives.

Gortz. Not so many as might at first be supposed. For have I not known excellent men among Princes;
and

and shall I imagine the race is extinct? good men, who valued the happiness of their people as if it had been their own; who could suffer a noble independent neighbour near them, nor feel inclined either to envy, or to fear him; whose hearts expanded while they sat at table, surrounded by their equals; and who sought not to degrade a free Knight into a Courtier, before they would permit him to share in their society.

George. Have you been acquainted with Princes of such a character?

Gortz. Yes. I shall remember as long as I live, the time, when the Landgrave of Hanau gave a hunting-match: all the Princes and Noblemen who were of the party, dined under the cope of the free Heavens, while the country people crowded from all quarters to gaze on them. This was no idle revel, given merely to do honor to its master; but the children with their chubby rosy faces; the middle-aged, with manners at once dignified and respectful; the old men with their venerable and interesting countenances;—all, with happy hearts, participated in the pleasures of their Prince, who on God's earth, and on a level with them, felt his joy doubled while he perceived all around him shared it.

George. His character must have resembled yours.

Gortz. Shall we not hope that more such Princes may arise to bless our posterity? That obedience to the Emperor, peace and friendship with our neighbours, and love and consideration for our vassals, may be the costly treasures which our children and grand-children may inherit? Every one will then preserve his own; and seek only by honest means to encrease it; instead of which, no one now values an acquisition but in proportion to the fraud, or the force, by which he has obtained it.

George. But in those days we should have no falling out, no making war;—

Gortz. Would to God, that in all Germany, there existed not one turbulent disposition, not one discontented spirit! We should still find sufficient exercise for our
love

love of arms. We would clear our mountains from the wolves that infest them ; we would rouse the wild-boar amid his native forests ; we would fetch our laborious neighbours game from the woods, and accept a pottage from them in return. Were this not sufficient, we and our brethren would guard the boundaries of the empire, like Cherubims with flaming swords, against the wolves of Turkey, against the foxes of France : and defend at once, the now neglected lands of our dear Emperor, and the peace and happiness of our fellow-subjects.—What a delight were that ! George. To venture our lives in the service of our country ; to—

George. (*Springing up with the wildest enthusiasm.*) Glorious ! Glorious !

Gortz. (*Smiling*) Where art thou going there ?

George. Alas ! I had forgot that we are blockaded : 'tis the Emperor too who has besieged us ; and to escape with our lives from this danger, we are setting them every instant at the hazard.

Enter Lersen.

Lersen. Liberty ! Liberty ! those are the weakest fellows ;—the most wavering deliberating scoundrels ;—you may all march out with your weapons, your horses, and your arms. Your provisions, however, you must leave behind.

Gortz. Whatever they find of that kind is not likely to give them the tooth-ach.

Lersen. (*Aside to Gortz*) Have you concealed the silver ?

Gortz. No.—Wife, go with Francis, he has something to say to thee.

[*Exeunt*]

COURT

COURT YARD OF THE CASTLE.

Stables discovered, in which GEORGE is busied in saddling, &c. a horse. He sings, and speaks between whiles to the horse.

George. (Singing)

"There was a boy he caught a bird."—

(To the horse) Stand still I say—

(Singing) "There was a boy he caught a bird"—

(To the horse) Come up!—*(Rubbing down the horse.)*

(Singing)

"The simple boy he oped the cage,

"And fought with it to play ;

"His prize the lucky moment spied,

"And instant flew away.

"The bird its new-recovered wings

"Exerted full of joy ;

"And safe beyond his utmost reach,

"It mocked the stupid boy."

Enter Gortz.

Gortz. Art thou ready ?

George. (Leading out his horse) Yes, they are all faddled.

Gortz. Why, thou art alert to-day.

George. As the bird just escaped from his cage.

All the Besieged enter.

Gortz. Have you got your muskets ?—No !—Return then, and fetch the best from the armoury. We will ride forwards.

[Exeunt.]

George.

George. (*Following them, singing*)
"The bird the lucky moment spied
"And joyful flew away."—

[Exit.]

THE ARMOURY,

Two Soldiers.

1st Soldier. (*Taking down a musket*) I will take this.

2d Soldier. And I this. There is one that appears better though.

1st Soldier. Come—be quick—Let's be off.

(*Tumult heard without.*)

2d Soldier. Hark! hark!

1st Soldier. (*Springing to the window*) Help! Holy God! they're murdering my master. He is unhorsed! George falls!

2d Soldier. How shall we save ourselves! we may escape from the walls to the nut-tree, and so down into the field. (*running out*)

1st Soldier. Lersen still stands his ground—I'll fly and join him. If Gortz falls, may I never survive him!

[Exit.]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

AN INN AT HEILBRONN.GORTZ *alone.*

Gortz. I AM just like the evil spirit which the Capuchin conjured into a sack : I have worked my way out, and my toil has obtained me no advantage. These perjured villains!

Enter Elizabeth.

Gortz. What news, for God's sake, Elizabeth! what news of my beloved associates?

Elizabeth. Nothing certain. Some have perished, and some lie in chains in the tower. No one would, or could give me any more particulars.

Gortz. Is such the reward of fidelity—of filial affection and obedience, for which it was promised thee thou shouldst prosper, that thy days should be long on the earth?

Elizabeth. Dearest husband! do not dispute the Eternal's will. They have their reward; it was born with them : a free, a noble heart, which no chains can confine, which amid all the horrors of imprisonment is still free. I do beseech thee, Gortz, behave with deference to the deputed counsellors. The Emperor's power transmitted

transmitted to their persons, the large golden chains which they wear as the badge of their authority.—

Gortz. (*Interrupting*) Become them, just as necklaces would swine! Oh! that I had seen George and Francis taken prisoners!

Elizabeth. It was a sight to have made angels weep.

Gortz. I should not have wept. I should have gnashed my teeth, and choaked with my efforts to curb in my rage. In chains! those I valued higher than my soul! Dear, dear, beloved children! had ye not been so attached to me—I should never have been able to turn my eyes from such a sight—How did they dare to break that word they had pledged in the name of the Emperor?

Elizabeth. Quiet, I beseech you, these tumultuous thoughts; consider you are even now to appear before the Council; your temper is so ruffled, so disturbed, I have every thing to apprehend from your meeting them in such a frame of mind.

Gortz. What would they have of me?

Elizabeth. See! the messenger of justice.

Gortz. The ass of justice! that drags her sacks to the mill, and her rubbish off the field. How now?

Enter Messenger.

Messenger. The Lords Commissioners are assembled in the council chamber, and summon you to appear before them.

Gortz. I come.

Messenger. I shall attend you.

Gortz. Too great an honor!

Elizabeth. Constrain yourself, I conjure you!

Gortz. Be under no uneasiness. [*Exeunt*]

COUNCIL CHAMBER.

IMPERIAL COUNSELLORS; GENERAL of the IMPERIAL forces; chief MAGISTRATES of HEILBRONN.

Magistrate. We have at your command, collected
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the bravest and most vigorous of our citizens : they are at hand, and await but a sign from you, to seize and overpower Berlingen.

1st Counsellor. We shall report in the most favourable terms, your obsequious and ready obedience to his Imperial Majesty's most sovereign and absolute commands. Are they artificers ?

Magistrate. Smiths, porters, carpenters ; fellows with practised fists, and resolute hearts.

1st Counsellor. 'Tis well.

Enter Messenger.

Messenger. Gortz of Berlingen is without, and awaits your pleasure.

Counsellor. Let him come in. *(Exit messenger)*

Enter Gortz.

Gortz. God keep you, my Lords ! what would you have of me ?

Counsellor. First, that you consider where you are, and before whom you stand.

Gortz. By my oath, I do not mistake you my Lords.

Counsellor. You do your duty.

Gortz. With my whole heart !

Counsellor. Be seated.

Gortz. *(Pointing to a low seat prepared for him)* What, down below here ? I can stand : that miserable little stool favours too strongly of poor sinners ; as indeed does the whole apartment.

Counsellor. Stand then, and await our pleasure.

Gortz. To your business !—if you please.

Counsellor. We shall proceed in order.

Gortz. I would you had ever done so.

Counsellor. You remember, that you surrendered yourself unconditionally into our hands.—

Gortz. What would you give me if I could forget it ?

Counsellor. If I could give you humility, I should do service to your cause.

Gortz. Do service to my cause ! As if that were possible

possible to you. Are you not aware that far greater powers are requisite to serve it, than you possess and exercise with so much pleasure, to injure it?

Secretary. Am I to register all this?

Counsellor. Whatever belongs to the proceedings of the court.

Gortz. For what I care, you may print it.

Counsellor. You stand in the power of his most sovereign majesty the Emperor, whose paternal mercy, taking the place of his Imperial justice, allotted his well-beloved city of Heilbronn for you to abide in, instead of condemning you to the depths of a dungeon. You bound yourself by an oath to deport yourself as should become a knight, and patiently and humbly to await the declaration of his majesty's further pleasure with regard to you.

Gortz. Well! Am I not here, and do I not await it?

Counsellor. And we are here to announce to you his Imperial Majesty's mercy and grace: he pardons you your manifold transgressions; he revokes the sentence of the Ban pronounced against you; he releases you from all well-deserved punishment which your irregularities had incurred; and he requires you to acknowledge his goodness with humble gratitude, and as a proof of your submission, to subscribe the paper which we have to lay before you.

Gortz. I am, as ever, his Majesty's faithful subject. But a word before you proceed. Where are my people? What is to become of them?

Counsellor. It is not for you to ask questions.

Gortz. So may the Emperor turn his face from you, in the day of your necessity? They were my associates; my friends;—they shall be still so! What have you done with them?

Counsellor. We owe you no account of them.

Gortz. Ah! I had forgot;—you do not even consider yourselves as bound by any promise, or accountable for any engagement: how then could I expect—

Counsellor. Our commission is to lay before you the paper I have mentioned. Submit yourself to the Em-

peror, and you may then find an opportunity of petitioning for the lives and liberties of your adherents.

Gortz. Let me see your paper.

Counsellor. Secretary, read the paper.

Secretary. (*Reads*) "I, Gortz of Berlingen, acknowledge by these presents, that I lately, in opposition to the duty I owe the Emperor and the State, have in a rebellious manner—

Gortz. (*Interrupting him, and with great emotion*) 'Tis false! I am no rebel! I never broke my oath of allegiance to the Emperor; and as for the State, I owe it nothing.

Counsellor. Constrain yourself, and hear further.

Gortz. I'll hear no more! Let him stand forward that can accuse me! Did I ever in the course of my life oppose the Emperor or the House of Austria? Have I not rather by every action proved, that I felt more deeply than almost any man, what Germany owes her sovereign; and particularly what the knights, the freebarons, and the citizens owe their Emperor? I were indeed a villain if I could be persuaded to subscribe such a falsehood?

Counsellor. And yet we have the strictest orders to induce you to do so by fair means; or in case of refusal, to commit you to the tower.

Gortz. To the tower! Me!—

Counsellor. And you must there await your sentence from justice, since you refuse to accept it from the hands of mercy.

Gortz. To the tower! you abuse the Imperial authority. To the tower!—He never issued such a command. The traitors! To prostitute their oaths, their knightly honour, as a lure to entice me into the pit they had prepared for me! To promise me an honourable confinement, and then dare to break their word!

Counsellor. We owe no faith to a robber.

Gortz. Didst thou not bear the sacred image of that Sovereign, whose majesty I honor even in its despicable counterfeit, thou shouldst eat that word, or strangle in the effort! I have been taken fighting in an honourable cause;

cause; thou mightest give God thanks, and feel thyself elevated in the sight of the world, if thou hadst ever in thy life atchieved so noble a deed, as that for which I now stand here a prisoner!

(Counsellor makes a sign to the Magistrate, who rings a bell)

Gortz. Not in the attempt to secure to myself a miserable gain; not in the endeavour to wrest from an unarmed peasantry, the lands they possessed not the power of defending, did I stand forward in arms. To free my own vassals; to guard my own life! Which of you will pretend that there was any thing unjustifiable in that? The Emperor and the State, buried in their down cushions, can neither feel our necessities, nor redress our grievances. I thank God that one hand yet remains to me; and I feel justified in having employed it to defend myself.

Enter Citizens, armed with swords and staves.

Gortz. How now?

Counsellor. You would not listen to reason: seize him as your prisoner!

Gortz. Is that your purpose? Let not him who possesses not the strength of an Hungarian ox, venture to approach too near me; for, by my oath, he shall be greeted with such a blow on the ear, from this my Iron right-hand, as shall cure him most effectually from the head-ache, the tooth ache, and all other aches that are felt in this world. *(They attack him; he strikes several of them to the ground, and wrests a sword from the side of one of them. They yield)* Come on! come on! I should like to become acquainted with the bravest of you.

Counsellor. Surrender yourself!

Gortz. *(With the sword in his hand)* Are you now convinced, that at this moment it depends only on myself to cut a passage through these hare-hunters, and with one effort to recover the open fields, and my liberty? But I will teach you how a man of honour keeps his word. Promise me such a confinement as will

will not be disgraceful to a knight and a soldier, and I will yield my arms, and become again your prisoner.

Counsellor. Would you prescribe terms to the Emperor, with your sword in your hand.

Gortz. God forbid! Only to you and your honorable associates. (*Turning to the citizens*) You may go home to your work, good people! You will gain nothing to requite you for this loss of time: here, is nothing to be obtained but blows and bruises.

Counsellor. Seize him, I say! Cannot your affection for your Emperor inspire you with more courage?

Gortz. No;—no more than the Emperor would give plaster to heal the wounds their courage might occasion them.

(*Enter Messenger.*)

Messenger. The ward even now announces from the watch-tower, that a body of more than two hundred horsemen approach the town. They wound unseen round the heights of Weinhal, and now threaten our walls.

Magistrate. Lord help us! What can this mean.

(*Enter the Ward.*)

Ward. Francis of Sickingen halts before the gates, and acquaints you, that he has heard how unworthily and how treacherously his brother-in-law has been treated, and that the magistrates of Heilbronn have been aiding and assisting in the business. He demands satisfaction for their conduct, and swears if he does not instantly receive it, that in one hour the town shall be set on fire at all the four quarters, and delivered up to his soldiers to plunder at discretion.

Gortz. Brave, noble brother!

Counsellor. Retire, Gortz. (*To the rest*) What is to be done?

Magistrate. Have compassion upon us and our fellow citizens. Sickingen is ungovernable in his wrath; and will not depart a tittle from his word.

Counsellor. What! Shall we suffer him to escape with impunity, who has thus braved our, and the Emperor's authority?

General.

General. Never—if we possessed forces to maintain our cause: but as it is, we should only fall a sacrifice to our temerity, and the affair would be in nothing the better. While by yielding, we may secure advantages.

Magistrate. Let us entreat Gortz to intercede for us. Methinks I see the town on fire already.

Counsellor. Let Gortz come in.

Gortz. (*Entering*) What is to be done?

Counsellor. Thou wouldst do well to persuade thy brother-in-law from his rebellious intentions. Instead of preserving thee from ruin, he will only plunge thee deeper into it, and become himself the associate of thy fall.

Gortz. (*Perceives Elizabeth at the door, and whispers to her*) Fly to him! tell him to force his way in, and without an instant's delay, to hasten hither. Entreat him not to do any injury to the town in his passage: if these villains here dare to oppose him, then let him use his power. I care not if I perish, so I can drag them down with me in my fall.

A great Hall before the Council-Chamber: the Council Chamber, &c. is beset with Sickingen's Soldiers.

SICKINGEN, GORTZ.

Gortz. It was indeed help from heaven! How didst thou happen to arrive at once so wished for, and so unexpected?

Sickingen. Why, without the assistance of magic. I had dispatched several messengers to enquire after thee, and on the first intimation I received of the perfidy and treachery that had been used towards thee, I set off. Now, we have our enemies in our power.

Gortz. I desire nothing of them, but such a confinement as may not be disgraceful to a knight and a soldier.

Sickingen. Thou art too honourable! wilt thou not even

even avail thyself of the advantages that the just have obtained over the perfidious? It is with justice they are punished, and we will in nothing alleviate their sufferings. They have shamefully misused the power delegated to them by the Emperor: and well as I know his majesty, I am convinced thou mightest stipulate for more, and with ease obtain it. This is far too little.

Gortz. I have ever been content with little.

Sickingen. And hast ever had less than thy deserts. My opinion is that thou oughtest to demand of them to yield up thy followers; and agree in return, to bind thyself and them by an oath to march peaceably to thy castle. Thou mightest promise too not to quit thy own territories. If thou art to be confined, better there than in this place.

Gortz. But they will tell me my estates are forfeited to the Emperor!

Sickingen. Thou mayest answer, thou wilt rent them till the Emperor will be pleased to invest thee again with them. Let them turn and twine like eels, they shall not escape us. They will talk of his Imperial Majesty, of the dignity of the charge he has conferred on them, but we will not listen to such arguments: I also know the Emperor, and have some influence over him. I know he has always wished to reckon thee among the commanders of his forces. Thou wilt not remain long inactive at thy castle; he will call thee forth to employ thee against his enemies.

Gortz. Would to God it might be soon, and ere I forget the use of arms!

Sickingen. Courage is never to be forgotten, as it is never to be learned. Give thyself no uneasiness; when thy affairs are regulated, I will away to the court. —My plans begin to ripen; favorable prospects flatter me; every circumstance excites me to declare myself. I have nothing now to do but to sound the inclinations of the Emperor. Treves and the Palatinate as much expect the skies to fall upon them, as me to rise above their heads; and I will come upon them like a thunder-storm! Then, if the power of regulating our
own

own fate is ever allowed us ;—then shall all my darling projects be realised, and thou—be the brother of an Elector !—I depended upon thy arm in this undertaking.

Gortz. (*Looking at his hand*) Ah ! this explains the dream I had the night before the fatal day on which I betrothed Maria to Falkenheim. He swore to me fidelity and friendship, and grasped my hand so hard, that it fell severed from my arm. Alas ! I am at this moment as defenceless as in the first instant when the shot carried it away. Adelbert ! Oh, Adelbert !

Sickingen. Forget the traitor ! We will confound his plots ; tear from him the mask of honor he now wears, and conscience and shame shall consume him. I see, I see thy enemies overthrown—in imagination already I trample my foes under my feet ! But one half year more, Gortz !——

Gortz. Thy spirit towers high ; I know not how it is, since some time past, no joyful prospects have opened to my sight ; no beam of hope has visited my soul. I have before been unfortunate, I have before been a prisoner ; but such despondency as I now feel did I never yet experience.

Sickingen. Success shall animate courage. Let us away to these grey-beards ; they have had sufficient time for consideration : We will now take the trouble off their hands. [*Exeunt*]

ADELAIDE'S CASTLE.

ADELAIDE, ADELBERT of Falkenheim.

Adelaide. It is most mortifying !

Falkenheim. I could have gnashed my teeth to dust. So fair a plan ! So fortunately accomplished ! And at last to relinquish every advantage ! To allow him to return to his own castle ! That cursed Sickingen !

Adelaide. They ought never to have consented to it.

Falkenheim. What could they do ? They were surrounded

rounded on all sides. Sickingen threatened with fire and sword. That high-spirited—unbending—impetuous man! I detest him. His power increases like a mountain-stream, which having swallowed up a few petty brooks, the rest descend of themselves into its torrent.

Adelaide. Had they no sovereign? Could he not—

Falkenbelm. Dear Wife! he is but the shadow of an Emperor. He is old and doating. When he heard what had happened, and when I endeavoured to rouse his anger against the commissioners, "Let it rest," said he, "I can well spare that little spot to my brave old Gortz, and if he remains quiet there, of what have you to complain?" We represented to him what the welfare of the state required: "Talk no longer to me of the welfare of the state," replied he, "would I had ever possessed counsellors who had directed my unquiet spirit more to the happiness of individuals!"

Adelaide. He loses the spirit of a sovereign.

Falkenbelm. We inveigh'd against Sickingen. "He is my faithful subject," said he, "and though he might not act at my command, yet has he fulfill'd my will, far better than those I empower'd to do it: it is the same whether I give him my sanction before or after."

Adelaide. 'Tis enough to drive one to distraction!

Falkenbelm. But I have not yet lost all hope; he has pledged his word as a knight to march peaceably to Yarthausen, and to confine himself within the limits of his own domains: but I know 'tis impossible to him, to remain long inactive: we shall soon have a fresh cause of accusation against him.

Adelaide. And the sooner, since we may reasonably hope the old Emperor will not remain long in this world. Charles, his accomplished successor possesses views more enlarged, and sentiments more worthy of a sovereign.

Falkenbelm. Charles! he is neither crown'd nor elected.

Adelaide. Who does not expect, who does not desire his accession?

Falkenbelm.

Falkenbelm. You have a high opinion of his perfections! One might almost suspect you regarded him with partial eyes.

Adelaide. You offend me, Adelbert, is it possible you can think so?

Falkenbelm. I said nothing that ought to offend you: but I can no longer be silent on this subject. Charles's uncommon attention to you gives me great uneasiness.

Adelaide. And my manner of receiving it—?

Falkenbelm. Thou art a woman; none of you can hate those who flatter you.

Adelaide. This, from you!

Falkenbelm. The horrible thought consumes my very heart! Adelaide!—

Adelaide. Can I cure thy folly?

Falkenbelm. If thou wouldst. Thou mightst retire from the court.

Adelaide. With what propriety, whilst thou belongest to it? Am I to forsake thee and my friends, to immerse myself with the owls in an old castle? No, Falkenbelm! it is impossible; it were preposterous.—Set thy heart at rest; thou knowest that I love thee.

Falkenbelm. Thy affection is the sacred anchor on which my hope depends during the fury of this storm. Yet even this may fail me!— [Exit]

Adelaide. (Alone) Is it thus thou commencest? this alone was wanting. The designs which I cherish are too vast for thy weak efforts to oppose. Charles! at once a sovereign, and the noblest, the most accomplish'd of his sex! and shall he be the only one among men, whom the possession of my favour would not flatter? Adelbert! seek not to oppose me; else must thou to the earth; my path passes over thee.—

Enter Frederic with a letter which he presents to her.

Adelaide. Did Charles himself give thee this?

Frederic. Yes.

Adelaide. What ails thee? thou appearest so dejected, so melancholy.

Frederic. It is your will that I should pine to death; that in the years of hope, I should despair.

Adelaide.

Adelaide. (*Afide*) I pity him from my heart : and how little would it cost me to make him happy. (*To him*) Be of good cheer, I am sensible of thy love and fidelity, and will not be ungrateful.

Frederic. (*His voice almost suffocated by emotion*) It is too late ; if you were even capable of it, I must now expire ! My God, I have not a drop of blood in my veins which is not yours ; not a faculty that is not exercised in loving you, in attempting to gain your favour !

Adelaide. Dear Frederic !

Frederic. You flatter me. (*Bursting into tears*) Did not affection like this merit a better return than to see another preferred before me ; could not a passion like mine, secure me from the anguish of knowing your whole heart, your every thought bestowed on Charles ?

Adelaide. Thou knowest not what thou wouldest ; and still less what thou speakest.

Frederic. (*Stamping his feet with vexation and rage.*) I will never—never again be the mean—the despicable instrument of your correspondence !

Adelaide. Frederic !—Thou forgettest thyself.

Frederic. To sacrifice myself ! my dear Lord !—

Adelaide. Begone from my sight !

Frederic. Dearest lady !

Adelaide. Leave me for ever ! Go, disclose my secret to thy dear Lord. I was a fool to imagine thee what thou art not.

Frederic. Dearest lady ! you know that I adore you.

Adelaide. And I imagined thee my best friend ;—held thee so near my heart. Go ! betray me.

Frederic. Rather would I tear my heart from my bosom. Forgive me ! forgive me, I entreat you. My heart swells with such insupportable emotions ;—my senses are so confused—I am almost distracted—

Adelaide. Dear enthusiastic boy ! (*Taking his hand, and drawing him towards her : he falls weeping on her neck.*)

Adelaide. Leave me.

Frederic. (*Hiding his tears on her bosom*) Oh God !

Adelaide. Leave me !—the very walls are traitors.

Leave

Leave me ! (*Extricating herself from his embrace*) Be steady to thy love and thy fidelity : and the fairest reward shall be thine. [*Exit*]

Frederic. (*Alone*) The fairest reward !—Oh ! Heavens, let me live but till that moment ; let it be mine, though instant death should follow. I should murder my father, were he to oppose my passage. [*Exit.*]

YARTHAUSEN.

Gortz seated at a Table ; Elizabeth beside him at work : a light, and writing materials on the table.

Gortz. I cannot endure this state of inactivity : my confinement becomes every day more irksome to me. I wish I could sleep : in any way deceive the tedious hours, or by any means persuade myself that idleness was pleasing.

Elizabeth. Why dost thou not continue the history of thy life which thou hast began ? Give a testimony into the hands of thy friends that shall put thine enemies to the blush : secure to thy noble descendants the joy of being acquainted with thy real character.

Gortz. Alas ! writing is at best but busy idleness ; and as such, is irksome and wearisome to me. While I write what I have done, I regret the loss of the time in which I might do more.

Elizabeth. Oh ! do not give way to despondency. (*Taking up the papers*) Thou art just at that part that gives an account of thy first imprisonment at Heilbronn.

Gortz. That has ever been a fatal place to me !

Elizabeth. (*Reading*) “ There were even many
“ among my confederates who blamed the confidence
“ with which I gave myself up into the power of my
“ bitterest enemies, from whom they assured me I must
“ expect the severest treatment ; but I said to them—”
Well, what didst thou say ? write on.

Gortz.

Gortz. I said to them,—“ Have I so often endangered my life in defence of other men’s lands and possessions; and shall I hesitate to venture it in support of my own honor and word?”

Elizabeth. Thou hast ever had the character of preserving both most sacredly.

Gortz. And of this they shall never deprive me! All else they have taken from me. My lands, my liberty.

Elizabeth. It was about that time that I went accidentally into the inn at Heilbronn, and found the knights of Singlingen and Miltenberg sitting there, to whom I was perfectly unknown. They were speaking of thee to each other; they praised thee with so much warmth—I felt such joy as when my son was born! One of them said, “ He is the pattern of all knights: noble and brave in prosperity; patient and resolute in adversity.”

Gortz. Let them point out the man to whom I ever broke my word! God knows, I have ever laboured rather to benefit my neighbour than myself; rather to deserve the name of a brave and true knight, than to acquire high dignities or extensive possessions! And God be thanked! all I aspired to he has granted me.

(Enter George and Lersen with game, &c.)

How fares it, my brave huntsmen?

George. From brave soldiers we are become hardy sportsmen; as it is easy to make slippers out of boots.

Lersen. It is still something that the liberty of hunting remains to us: the chase is a species of war.

George. And in some degree resembles the last we were engaged in; for the enemy ever flies before us. Do you remember, my Lord, how you prophesied, that when the world turned round, we should all become huntsmen? Without much alteration in it, your prediction is fulfilled with regard to us.

Gortz. It amounts to the same thing; it is we who have experienced a revolution.

George. These are awful times. For eight days past a dreadful comet has been seen; and all Germany

is in consternation lest it should portend the death of the Emperor, who lies dangerously sick.

Gortz. Dangerously sick!—The course of each of us is nearly run!

Lersen. And close around us here, the most terrible changes are taking place. The peasants have erected the standard of rebellion.

Gortz. Where?

Lersen. In the very heart of Suabia. They burn, pillage, and destroy all that comes in their way. I fear they will lay waste the whole land.

George. It is a most formidable insurrection; more than a hundred places have already declared in open rebellion; and every day multitudes crowd to join the insurgents. A whirlwind lately tore up whole forests by the roots; and shortly after the insurrection broke out, there appeared in that neighbourhood, two fiery swords crossing each other in the air, and blazing fearfully in the very front of the sky.

Gortz. How many of my best friends are suffering innocently under the pressure of these calamities!

George. What a pity that we may not march to their assistance!

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

INSURRECTION OF THE PEASANTS.

(Tumult and plundering in a village, women and old men loaded with children and packages, flying before the enemy.)

Old Man. AWAY! away, for God's sake! let us escape these blood-hounds!

1st Woman. God in heaven! how bloody red the sky is! the sun sinks in a sea of blood!

Old Woman. That's a sign of fire.

2d Woman. My husband! my husband!

Old Man. Away! away! To the woods! [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Link.

Link. Cut down whoever opposes you! The village is our own. Take care of the corn: do not let any of it be destroyed; and not a grain of it be left behind. Come! be quick! pillage it clear and clean out:—we'll set it a blazing when you've done with it.

Meisner. (*Running down from the hill above*) How fares it, Link?

Link. All hard at work as thou see'st. Thou art arrived just in time for the harvest-home. Whence com'st thou?

Meisner. From Weinsberg. We have had a most jolly day of it.

Link.

Link. How so.

Meisner. My Lord Diettrich of Weiler was the first performer. The fool! When we were in full career, and bearing down all before us, he must needs get up into a balcony, and attempt to preach patience to us! Bounce! a shot passed through his skull, and we flew up stairs like lightning, and out of the window with the rascal.

Link. Ah!

Meisner. (*To the peasants*) You dogs! must I come and hasten you? I'll make you repent your idleness. How they saunter and linger!—Blockheads!

Link. Set it on fire, I say! Let them roast in it! make haste you sluggards!

Meisner. After that, we led out the Counts of Helfenstein, Elterhofen, and about thirty nobles more; there might be eighty of them perhaps in all; we took them to the plain near Heilbronn; there was such shouting and huzzaing from our party when they saw the long file of poor, rich sinners march past them, staring wildly on each other, wringing their hands, and praying for assistance from earth and heaven. But we surrounded them before they were aware of us; and every one of them were knocked down by our pikes.

Link. To think I should miss being there!

Meisner. I never had such a day in my life before.

Link. (*To the Peasants*) Come! be quick there. Have you almost done?

Peasant. All's clear.

Link. Set it on fire then at all corners.

Meisner. It will make a brave bon-fire. Dost thou mark; while those wretches lay rolling and tumbling over each other, and croaking just like so many frogs, it did my heart as much good to see them, as a glass of brandy would in a cold morning. These were the fellows that rode on grand horses out a hunting, with their high plumes and their wide nostrils; and drove us before them with their dogs, and like their dogs.

Link. It smokes bravely already.

K

Meisner.

Meisner. They have set it on fire behind there. Let us load ourselves with booty, and set off to join the main body.

Link. Where is it stationed?

Meisner. Between this place and Heilbronn: they are at a loss for a commander, whom the people might look up to; they feel we are only their equals, and are self-willed, and difficult to be managed.

Link. Who do they think of offering the command to?

Meisner. Mark Sturt, or Gortz of Berlingen.

Link. Gortz of Berlingen! 'Twould be well indeed, if they could prevail on him to accept it. His name would give credit to the business: all the world respects him as a most brave knight. (*To the peasants*) On! on! we will away to Heilbronn. Give the word round!

Meisner. This fire will light us a good part of our way. Hast thou seen the great comet?

Link. Yes: 'tis an awful terrible sign. If we continue our march during the night, we shall see it plain enough. It rises about one.

Meisner. And sets about an hour and quarter after. How like a bent arm brandishing a sword it looks!—And so bloody, fiery, red!

Link. Didst thou see the three stars round the point of the sword?

Meisner. Aye—and the broad crimson streamers; and the thousand and thousand narrow stripes like pikes; and the lesser ones between, just like swords.

Link. It made my flesh tremble to look on it. And some part, pale dim red; and the other like clear fiery flames: and between them, indistinct horrible forms with shaggy heads and beards.

Meisner. Didst thou mark that too? And all confused and mingled with each other, as if they were contending in a sea of blood. It was enough to turn one's brain to look on it.

Link. Away! away!

[*Exeunt*]

OPEN

OPEN COUNTRY.

Two Villages are seen on fire at a distance; nearer, a Monastery.

COLE, WILD, MARK STURT, *crowd of* PEASANTS.

Sturt. You cannot desire that I should be your captain: it would neither profit yourselves or me. I am a vassal of the Palatinate, and could I lead you against my master? You would ever be suspecting that I did not do my best in your cause.

Cole. We knew thou wouldst seek to excuse thyself.

Enter Gortz, Lersen, George.

Gortz. What would you have of me?

Cole. That you would be our captain?

Gortz. Shall I break the sacred promise I have pledged to my sovereign, and go beyond the boundaries he has prescribed to me?

Wild. This is no excuse.

Gortz. And can you imagine, that even if I were at liberty, I would lend my sanction to such frantic enormities as you have committed at Weinsberg? That I would assist at the butchery of knights and noblemen? I would rather be shot dead like a mad dog than be your captain! Every where around, your course is marked by fire and by sword; the land behind you bleeds and burns.

Cole. Well! well! that is past, and cannot be mended now. If it were to do again, it might never happen.

Sturt. It was their misfortune, that in the first heat of the onset, they had no leader whom they could look up to, or who possessed power to control or moderate their rage. Assume the command of them, I entreat thee, Gortz! All Germany will be indebted to thee: the best and happiest consequences to all parties will arise from it: thou wilt be the blessed means of sparing the lives and possessions of thousands.

K 2

Gortz.

Gortz. Why dost thou not accept it?

Sturt. I have excused myself to them.

Cole. We have no time for idle talk: short, and to the purpose; Gortz! be our captain, or look to thy castle and thy life. We give thee two hours to consider our proposal. Guard him.

Gortz. That is unnecessary: I am resolved—and now is as good as hereafter. For what purpose have you risen in arms? To recover your rights and liberties? What advantage do you hope to obtain by laying waste and destroying your country? If you will solemnly engage yourselves to abstain from every kind of enormity—if you will act like brave and resolute men, who know what they would have, and stand steady to their purpose, I will myself assist you to obtain by honorable means, those rights which you have attempted to recover in so unjustifiable, so disgraceful a manner: and on these conditions, and on these alone, I will consent, for the space of a week, to be your captain.

Wild. What has passed, was only in the heat of our passion, and even without thy interference, might never have happened again.

Cole. You must engage yourself to remain with us for a quarter of a year at least.

Sturt. Let it be a month: that will content you both.

Gortz. I consent. Be it so.

Cole. Your hand.

Gortz. And promise me to send a written testimony of our agreement to the rest of your associates; and to impose upon them the strictest conformity and obedience to it.

Wild. We promise: It shall be done.

Gortz. On these conditions I bind myself to you for a month.

Sturt. Good fortune follow thee! Whatever thou dost, spare our gracious lord, the Count Palatine.

Cole. (*Aside to the Peasants*) Guard him: let no one speak to him but in your presence.

Gortz.

Gortz. Lersen! Return to my wife: remain with her: she shall hear from me soon.

[*Exeunt Gortz, George, Sturt, and some of the Peasants.*]

Enter Meisner and Link.

Meisner. What's this we hear of an agreement?—What's the use of an agreement?

Link. It was shameful to enter into such an agreement.

Cole. We know as well as you what is good for ourselves; and have as much right to take or to leave.

Wild. Burning and raging and murdering must have an end, sooner or later, to-day or to-morrow: and we have gained besides a brave noble commander.

Meisner. Have an end? Thou traitor! Why have we risen in arms, but to trample upon our enemies, and to exalt ourselves! 'Twas a slave, a vassal, that advised you to such an agreement.

Cole. Come along, Wild. There is no use in reasoning with him: he is as obstinate and as savage as a beast.

[*Exeunt Wild and Cole.*]

Meisner. You may go!—you will find few friends to support you. The scoundrels! Link, we let loose our blood-hounds—we will away and burn Miltenberg to ashes. If any dispute should arise from our having broken their agreement, we'll knock those who made it, and those who consented to it, on the head.

Link. By far the greatest part of the forces are on our side. Away! Away!

[*Exeunt.*]

HILL AND VALLEY.

A Mill in the back ground. A Troop of Soldiers. ADELBERT of Falkenbelm comes out of the Mill, followed by FREDERIC and a MESSENGER.

Falkenbelm. My horse!—Have you summoned the other Noblemen too?

Messenger

Messenger. At least seven detachments will join you in the wood behind Miltenberg. The peasants' forces are stationed near that place. Messengers are dispatched all round the land, and in a short time the whole army of the Empire will be collected. You cannot fail to be victorious, for it is said the enemy are very much divided among themselves.

Falkenbelm. So much the better!—Frederic!

Frederic. My gracious Lord?

Falkenbelm. Fulfil it punctually! (*With great anxiety and perturbation*) I charge thee by all thou holdest most sacred!—Give her my letter.—She shall away from the court to my castle. Instantly!—Dost thou mark me?—Instantly! Do thou wait to see her depart, and return immediately to acquaint me.

Frederic. It shall be done as you command.

Falkenbelm. Tell her she shall consent!—(*To the messengers*) Lead on the nearest way.

Messenger. We must go round. The streams are all swelled by the incessant heavy rains. [Exit]

YARTHAUSEN.

ELIZABETH, LERSEN.

Lersen. Be comforted, gracious lady!

Elizabeth. Ah Lersen! tears stood in his eyes as he took leave of me. It is cruel! cruel!

Lersen. He will soon return.

Elizabeth. It is not his absence that afflicts me. When he marched out to gain renown in honorable war, I was not sad; my heart was not thus afflicted. I dwelt with delight on the moment in which I should see him again; in which I should thank God with rapture for his return in safety. But now! I fear, I dread our next meeting.

Lersen. So noble, so excellent a man.—

Elizabeth.

Elizabethb. Ah ! do not call him so ; it only encreases my regret and my affliction. The wretches ! they threatened to murder him, and to lay his castle in ashes. If ever he returns to me, I shall see him gloomy, melancholy !—his enemies will frame treacherous accusations against him, and he will not be able to lay his hand on his heart, and say, “ I am innocent !

Lersen. He will, and can.

Elizabethb. He has broken his promise to the Emperor—Canst thou deny it ?

Lersen. Yes ; he was constrained ; and when that is palpable, on what grounds can they condemn him ?

Elizabethb. Malice does not seek for grounds ; it seizes on pretences. He has associated himself with rebels, malefactors, and murderers ; he has taken the command of them. Oh ! canst thou contradict me ?

Lersen. Cease to torment yourself and me. Have they not sacredly promised him, never again to be guilty of such enormities as they committed at Weinsberg ? Did I not hear them, half-repenting, say, that were it again to be done, it would never happen ? Are not princes and noblemen under the greatest obligations to him, who voluntarily assumes the command of such a savage banditti, solely to curb their rage, and to restrain their licentiousness ; who seeks not to aggrandize himself, to gratify any selfish passion, but merely to save the lives and possessions of their subjects, and their vassals ?

Elizabethb. Thou art a partial advocate.—If he should be taken prisoner, and treated as a rebel ;—if his grey head—*Lersen*—I shall lose my senses !

Lersen. Send sleep to recruit her strength, blessed Father in Heaven ! if thy wisdom vouchsafest not comfort to compose her soul !

Elizabethb. George has promised to bring me intelligence.—But he will never be able to get away. They are worse than prisoners ; I know they are guarded like enemies. That dear George ! He would not stir from his master !

Lersen. My heart bled when he sent me away from him.

him. If you had not needed my assistance; all the dangers of the most painful death should never have separated me from him.

Elizabeth. I know not where Sickingen is. If I could only dispatch a messenger to Maria.

Lersen. Write; I will take care your letters shall reach her.

NEAR A VILLAGE.

GORTZ. GEORGE.

Gortz. To horse! to horse! George; I see Miltenberg burning. Wretches! Incendiaries! Is it thus they hold their word? Gallop over to them George! tell them I renounce them for ever; they may make a gypsy their captain. Away! away! Hasten for God's sake. [*Exit George*] I would I were a thousand miles from hence, and tho' I lay at the bottom of the deepest dungeon in Turkey! If I could only free myself from them with honor! I contradict them continually; tell them the bitterest truths, and all in the hope, that weary of my authority they will at length be willing to release me from my engagement.

Enter a Stranger.

Stranger. God keep you, my Lord!

Gortz. God reward you, friend! your name?

Stranger. That has nothing to do with my business. I come to tell you that your life's in danger. The leaders are weary of your remonstrances and reproaches, and have determined to dispatch you. Disguise your opinions; or seek your safety in flight. And God conduct you! (*Exit*)

Gortz. (*Alone*) And is it thus thy life is to end Gortz! Art thou thus to lose it? so be it then! my death will at least be the strongest testimony to the world,

world, that I had nothing in common with these blood-hounds.

Several Peasants enter.

1st Peasant. My Lord! my Lord! they are defeated! they are taken prisoners!

Gortz. Who?

2d Peasant. Why, those who set fire to Miltenberg. A party of the Imperialists rushed upon them from behind the hill, and scarce one of them has escaped.

Gortz. They have met their reward!—(*With sudden and agonizing recollection*) Oh George! George! He was among those wretches—My George! my George!

Enter Meisner, Link, Cole and Peasants, &c.

Link. Away! my Lord! Away! This is no time for loitering. The enemy, in great force is close upon our heels.

Gortz. (*With great dignity*) Who set fire to Miltenberg?

Meisner. If you stand there making difficulties, you shall soon find we will treat you with very little ceremony.

Link. You had better be taking care of our lives and your own.

Gortz. (*To Meisner*) Dost thou threaten me, wretch! Dost thou imagine I shall tremble because thy garments are dyed in the Count of Helfenstine's blood?

Meisner. Berlingen!

Gortz. Dar'st thou repeat my name, and shall not my children blush that thy tongue should have polluted it?

Meisner. Thy name! weak vassal, coward! slave!

(*Gortz strikes him to the earth. The rest interfere*)

Cole. Are you mad? The enemy is pouring upon us from all sides, and you stand quarelling with each other.

Link. (*The Imperialists rush in*) Away! away! (*Tumult and fight*) [Exeunt]

L

Adelbert.

Adelbert of Falkenbelm rushes in followed by his Soldiers.

Falkenbelm. Pursue them! pursue them! They fly! they fly! Let neither the night nor the storm prevent you. I have certain intelligence that Gortz is among them. Exert every nerve to secure him. They say he is dangerously wounded. *[Exeunt Soldiers]*

Falkenbelm. *(Alone)* And when I have thee!—Shall I not yet shew mercy, if secretly and in prison the mortal sentence be executed? So shall he perish from the memory of men; and thou! oppressed overcharged heart, once more beat freely! *[Exit]*

MIDNIGHT, A DREARY FOREST—STORM.

ENCAMPMENT of the GYPSIES.

An old Woman (one of the gypsies) sitting over a fire of sticks.

Woman. Patch up that hole in the roof, daughter! the hail beats in heavily through it.

A Child coming in.

Child. See! I've caught a hamster, mother! and there! there are two field-mice.

Mother. We will roast them for thy supper; and thou shalt have a cap of the fur: Why, thou bleed'st?

Child. 'Tis the hamster has bitten me.

Mother. Fetch plenty of dry wood, that the fire may burn brightly by the time thy father comes home: he'll be wet to the skin.

Enter several Gypsies with Children at their back.

Mother. *(To the first)* Well, what hast thou brought home with thee?

1st Gypsy. Little enough. The whole country is up in arms: one's life is not safe a moment among them. Two towns are burning yonder bonfire-bright.

Mother. Oh! that is the red light then, that shines so bright below the sword. I've been looking at it a long

long time. One is grown quite used to that fiery sign in the heavens now.

Enter the Captain, Wolf, Schricks and other Gypsies.

Captain. Did you hear the Wild-Huntsman?

1st Woman. He passed over us like a whirlwind.

Captain. How the hounds yelled! wau! wau!

Wolf. And the whips cracked!

Schricks. And the huntsmen hallooed! Holla! ho!

Mother. The devil has let his whole pack loose to-night.

Captain. We have been fishing in troubled waters: the peasants themselves are turned robbers, and it would be hard indeed, if we might not be permitted to plunder.

2d Woman. What hast thou got, Wolf?

Wolf. Why there! a leveret and heath-cock: they'll make a famous supper for us: and a bundle of linen, and two pot-ladles, and a bridle.

Schricks. And I've got a woollen coverlid, and a pair of boots, and a tinder-box and matches.

Mother. It is all as wet as dung: give it me here: I'll dry it.

Captain. Hark! a horse! Go, see who comes.

Enter Gortz, on horseback.

Gortz. Oh God, be thanked! yonder is a fire:—these are gypsies. My wounds bleed to death: my enemies pursue me:—Holy God! thou endest cruelly with me!

Captain. Is it in peace that thou comest?

Gortz. I entreat assistance from you I am faint to death with loss of blood Help me to dismount.

Captain. Help him from his horse. A noble man in person and in words. *(They assist him to dismount; and support him.)*

Wolf. *(Whispering)* It is Gortz of Berlingen.

Captain. You are welcome.—All we possess is at your service.

Gortz. I thank you.

L 2

Captain.

Captain. Come into my tent. [*Exeunt, Gortz supported by Wolf and Sbricks.*]

INSIDE OF THE CAPTAIN'S TENT.

CAPTAIN, WOLF, GORTZ, *laying on a kind of couch.*

Captain. (To *Wolf*) Call thy mother. Tell her to bring bandages, and roots to staunch the blood. (*Gortz takes off his armour, the Captain assists him.*)

Captain. (Offering him cloaths) Here is my best suit for you.

Gortz. May God reward you!

(*The old woman comes in, and dresses, and binds his wounds*)

Captain. I am heartily glad to be of service to you.

Gortz. Do you know me?

Captain. Who does not know you?—Gortz! our life's blood should be sacrificed in thy service!

Enter Sbricks.

Sbricks. A troop of horse are galloping through the wood: they are Imperialists.

Captain. Your enemies!—but they shall never reach you. Away! Sbricks—rouse up our party: we know every turning and winding of the wood better than they can do; and we will steal upon them, and cut them down, before they are aware that we are near them. [*Exeunt.*]

Gortz. (Alone) Oh Emperor!—My Sovereign! Robbers protect thy children! (*A heavy firing heard*) These wild rough fellows!—they are yet staunch and true.

(*Woman entering.*)

Woman. Fly! Save yourself; the enemy is victorious.

Gortz. Where's my horse?

Woman. Hard by,

Gortz.

Gortz. (*Springing up, and without staying to put on his armour*) For the last time they shall feel my arm : It is not yet so weak— (*Rushes out*)

Woman. He flies to join our party !
(*Dreadful firing heard, which appears every moment to approach nearer,*)

Wolf. (*Rushing in almost breathless*) Away ! Away !
All's lost.—Our brave captain killed—Gortz a prisoner.
(*Shrieking of women : tumult—flight.*)

ADELAIDE'S BED-CHAMBER.

Adelaide. (*With a letter*) Either he or I !—Rash fool ! dost thou dare to threaten me ?—Thy ruin shall avenge me.—Who is stealing with such timid steps through the gallery ? (*Some one knocks*) Who is there ?

Frederic, (*softly without.*)

Frederic. Open the door to me, dearest lady.

Adelaide. Frederic ?—He well deserves I should admit him. (*She opens the door.*)

Frederic. (*Falling upon her neck*) Dear adorable lady !

Adelaide. Rash boy ! If any one should have heard you now ?

Frederic. Oh no ! The whole castle is buried in sleep.

Adelaide. What brings you here ?

Frederic. I cannot rest. The threats of my Lord ; your danger, my passion for you—

Adelaide. (*Interrupting*) Did he appear greatly incensed when you took leave of him ?

Frederic. More agitated than I had ever seen him. “She shall away to my castle,” said he, “she shall consent to it.”

Adelaide. And shall I obey his haughty commands ?

Frederic. I know not ; gracious lady—

Adelaide.

Adelaide. Inconsiderate, credulous boy! thou can'st not fathom the depths of his designs. He has long sought to deprive me of my liberty, but in this place, he is convinced I am safe from his attempts. He will force me to his castle, and there, his power may treat me, just as his hatred shall suggest.

Frederic. He shall not!—

Adelaide. Wilt thou prevent it?

Frederic. He shall not!

Adelaide. I see before-hand the whole extent of my misery. He will tear me by force from his castle to entomb me for ever in a cloister.

Frederic. Death and hell!—

Adelaide. Wilt thou save me, my Frederic?

Frederic. Rather would I—

Adelaide. (*weeping on his neck*) Frederic! I conjure thee—Oh! save me!—Save thyself!—

Frederic. He shall to the earth!—I will set my foot upon his neck.—

Adelaide. Restrain thy rage. It is not with such weapons we must oppose him. Thou shalt bear him a letter full of obedience and submission—And this liquid—(*scornfully*) Dost thou shudder?—Pour it into his cup.—

Frederic. Give it me!—you shall be free!

Adelaide. Free.—Then shalt thou no longer steal trembling to meet me; and I no longer anxiously exclaim, break we off, Frederic! see! the morning dawns!

HEILBRONN, BEFORE THE TOWER.

ELIZABETH, LERSEN.

Lersen. God has compassion upon your sufferings, gracious lady. Maria is arrived to comfort you.

Elizabeth. God be thanked!—Lersen, we are sunk into

into the very depths of misery: the worst my fears pre-
saged is now fulfilled. Taken prisoner as a rebel—
thrown like a malefactor into the deepest dungeon—

Lersen. I know it all.

Elizabeth. Thou dost not know! thou canst not
even imagine!—The misery is too great to be conceived.
Oh! if thou wert to see him!—His reverend age—his
wounds—the slow fever that consumes him—and worse
than all, the dark and settled grief that preys upon his
soul, to think his noble career should thus unworthily
finish—his honourable life thus ignominiously end!—

Lersen. And to add to our misfortunes, that Falken-
helm should be his judge.

Elizabeth. Falkenheim?

Lersen. The rebels have been treated with unex-
ampled severity. Meisner was burnt alive: and hun-
dreds of others, racked, impaled, beheaded, tortured.
The country round looks like a butcher's shambles.

Elizabeth. Falkenheim his judge!—Oh God! a ray
of hope breaks upon me. I will send Maria to him—
he cannot—Oh! he cannot sure refuse her—he had ever
a merciful heart;—and when he sees her whom he
once so loved—her, whom he himself has rendered so
wretched—Where is she?

Lersen. Still at the inn.

Elizabeth. Oh! lead me to her. She shall imme-
diately away. [*Exeunt*]

FALKENHELM'S CASTLE.

ADELBERT of Falkenbelm. (*Rising from a couch.*)

I am so faint—so weak!—my bones are hollow—this
burning fever has consumed their very marrow. No rest
or peace can I taste night or day: horrible dreams tor-
ment my broken slumbers. Methought last night I
met Gortz in a forest: he drew his sword, and chal-
lenged me to combat: I laid my hand on mine—
but

but my palsied arm refused its office : he returned his weapon to its sheath ; smiled contemptuously upon me, and passed on. He is a prisoner—and I tremble before him !——Wretch ! thy voice could adjudge him to death, and thou shuddereſt like a criminal, before his fleeting shadow in a dream !——And ſhall he die ?—Gortz !—Gortz !—We mortals direct not ourſelves :—demons are allowed an aſcendency over us, and they fulfil their horrible pleaſures upon us to our deſtruction. (*Seating himſelf.*) Faint ! and yet fainter !——How came my nails ſo blue ?—A cold, cold, conſuming perſpiration palsies every limb.—Every thing ſwims before my fight. Could I but ſleep.——Ah !

Enter Maria.

Father of mercies ! Let me reſt ! Let me reſt !—That form alone was wanting to my torments.—She expires ! Maria expires ! and her departing ſpirit appears before me !—Leave me ? Oh ! leave bleſſed ſoul !—I was before ſufficiently tortured. (*Hiding his face.*)

Maria. (*Throwing back the light veil which ſhaded her face*) Falkenheim ! it is no ſpirit ; I am Maria.

Falkenbelm. (*Without looking on her*) It is her voice !

Maria. I come to ſupplicate my brother's life from thee. He is innocent, Oh Falkenheim ! he is innocent, however culpable he may appear.

Falkenbelm. Peace ! Peace, Maria ! Angel of heaven, heap not the tortures of hell upon my ſoul. Speak no more !

Maria. And ſhall my brother die ? Falkenheim ! it is horrible, horrible ! that I need ſay to thee he is innocent ; that I muſt ſupplicate, muſt kneel to thee to ſave thee from the blackeſt, the fouleſt of all murders. The very depths of thy ſoul are poſſeſt by infernal ſpirits. Can this be Adelbert ?

Falkenbelm. Thou ſee'ſt the conſuming breath of death has breathed upon me : my ſtrength ſinks down into the grave. I was expiring in miſery, and thou art come to plunge me into deſpair. If I could ſpeak, thy proudeſt hate would melt into pity and forgiveness. Maria ! Oh Maria !

Maria.

Maria. Falkenhelm, my brother languishes in prison; consumed by age, by sickness, by his wounds.—And if thou wert capable of bringing his grey head—
(*Turning from him with indescribable anguish*) Falkenhelm! we should despair!

(*Falkenhelm rings the bell.*)

(*Frederic enters in extreme agitation and emotion.*)

Frederic. My gracious Lord!

Falkenhelm. The papers there, Frederic.

(*Frederic brings them.*)

Falkenhelm. (*Tearing open a packet, and shewing Maria a paper*) There is your brother's death-warrant!

Maria. Oh God of heaven!

Falkenhelm. (*Tearing it*) And thus I destroy it! He lives. But can I again raise the fabric I have levelled with the dust?—weep not thus, my Frederic! Dear boy! my misery goes to his very heart.

(*Frederic throws himself at his feet, and embraces his knees*)

Maria. (*Aside*) The hand of death is on him. My heart is torn with anguish at the sight of his sufferings. How did I love him once! The first affections of my heart were his, and now I am again near him, every sentiment of tenderness revives.

Falkenhelm. Arise, dear Frederic! and dry thy tears, I may yet recover. Hope forsakes not the living.

Frederic. There is no hope—you must die!

Falkenhelm. I must?

Frederic. (*Springing up and almost frantically*) Poisoned! poisoned! by your wife—by me. (*He rushes out*)

Falkenhelm. Follow him, Maria! he is frantic with despair. [*Exit Maria*]

Falkenhelm. Poison from my wife!—Horror, horror! I feel it in every vein. Torture and death.—

Maria. (*Shrieking within*) Help! help!

Falkenhelm. (*Attempting to rise and unable*) Good God! is even this refused me?

Maria. (*Entering*) He is gone! he is lost for ever. He rushed with the swiftness of the wind to the balcony window,

window, and plunged like lightning into the waves below.

Falkenbelm. He is at peace ! Thy brother is out of danger : the rest of the judges, and Seckendorf in particular, are his friends. Farewell for ever, Maria ! Leave me.

Maria. I will remain with thee, thou poor forsaken one !

Falkenbelm. Wretched and forsaken indeed ! Thou art a fearful avenger, Oh God !—My wife—

Maria. Renounce such thoughts ; and turn thy heart to mercy : calm thy troubled spirit, Oh Adelbert !

Falkenbelm. Go ! sweet soul !—Leave me to my misery.—Terrible ! Even thy presence, Maria, thy last consolations, are torture !

Maria. (*Aside*) Strengthen me, Oh God ! My spirit sinks into the dust with his.

Falkenbelm. Horror ! horror ! poisoned by my wife ! My Frederic seduced by this fiend ! Now is she waiting, trembling with impatience the arrival of the messenger who is to bring her the joyful intelligence ; who is to whisper to her “ He is dead.”—And thou, Maria ! wherefore didst thou come, to arouse every sleeping remembrance of my sins ! Leave me, oh leave me ! that I may die.

Maria. Let me remain with thee. Thou art alone. Imagine me thy nurse. Forget all ! May God forgive thee all, as I forgive thee !

Falkenbelm. Thou spirit of peace and mercy, pray for me ! Pray for me ! My heart is closed.

Maria. Be comforted ! He will have mercy on thee. Thou art faint.

Falkenbelm. I am dying—dying, and yet cannot expire : and in this fearful strife between life and death, are all the tortures of hell.

Maria. Mercy ! Have mercy, oh God ! upon him. Let one beam of thy love visit his despairing heart, that may expand it to peace and to comfort, and diffuse hope—heavenly hope over his fainting soul !

MIDNIGHT

MIDNIGHT.

Inside of a ruined Chapel.

(*The storm is still heard raging without, and sweeping at intervals thro' the long ailes of the building. Partial and transient gleams of moon-light serve to discover the dismantled windows, the mouldering monuments, and the insignia of knightbood, swords, helmets, and escutcheons, which are displayed against the walls. In the back ground is an altar sinking in ruins. Broken pillars, and fragments of images lie scattered around. The ruins are in many places overgrown with ivy, moss, and weeds. Near the altar are two rows of seats. Upon the altar lie a dagger and a cord.*)

(*The Members of the secret Tribunal disguised in black robes, are seated on either side the Altar. The Free-graf, who is President, behind it.*)

President. Members of that awful Tribunal, which emulates heaven in secrecy, and in impartiality; Ye, who have sworn by the sacred cord and dagger, like the Eternal to adjudge in darkness, like the Eternal to punish in concealment—If your hearts are free from misdeeds, your hands pure from innocent blood, lift high the avenging arm in judgment against the guilty, call down vengeance! vengeance upon them!

All. Vengeance! vengeance!

President. (*To the Assessor*) Open the court.

Assessor. (*Rising*) I demand accusations against the guilty. Let him whose heart reproaches him with no crime, whose hand no innocent blood has ever polluted; let him swear by the sacred cord and dagger; by the sacred cord and dagger let him accuse!

1st Member. (*Rising and advancing*) My heart is pure from misdeeds; my hands from innocent blood. May heaven forgive me every evil thought, and deny the power of executing it! I raise my hand in judgment against the guilty. I accuse! I accuse!

M 2

President

President. Whom dost thou accuse ?

1st Member. (He uncovers his head, and advancing toward the altar, lays his hand upon the dagger) I accuse by the dagger and the cord, Adelaide of Falkenheim. She has committed adultery—she has seduced his page to murder her husband. The page has judged and punished himself. Her husband is dead.

President. Wilt thou swear by the God of truth that thy accusation is true ?

1st Member. I swear! (He kisses the cross which forms the handle of the dagger)

President. Dost thou pledge thyself to suffer the punishment of murder and adultery should it prove false ?

Member. I pledge myself.

President. Your voices! (They all give him their votes secretly.)

1st Member. Judge of the secret tribunal, pronounce sentence on Adelaide of Falkenheim, convicted of adultery and of murder.

President (Rising) Let her die! Let her die a lingering double death With the cord and the dagger let her expiate her double, double crime! Raise high your hands to heaven, and call down vengeance on her. Vengeance! vengeance! in the hands of the avenger.

All. Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

President. Avenger! avenger, come forth!

(2d Member rises and advances to the Altar.)

President. Receive here the sacred cord and the dagger, to exterminate her from the face of the earth! Wherever thou shalt find her, down with her to the dust!—Judges! who condemn in secret, and like God avenge in concealment, keep your hearts from crimes, your hands from innocent blood!

AN INN.

MARIA, LERSEN.

Maria. The horses are sufficiently rested : Lersen, we will away.

Lersen. You had better wait 'till morning, the night is so tempestuous.

Maria. Lersen, I can taste no rest 'till I have seen my brother. Let us away. The weather clears up apace ; we may expect a fine morning.

Lersen. It shall be as you wish.

HEILBRONN. GORTZ'S PRISON.

GORTZ, ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth. I entreat thee, dearest husband, speak to me ! thy silence distresses me ; I know it preys upon thine own heart. Come, let me see after thy wounds : they get better every day. In this gloomy desponding melancholy, I no longer discover my husband.

Gortz. Dost thou seek Gortz ? He is long gone for ever. They have bereft me of all that I most valued ; my sword, my liberty, my estates, and my good name ; as to my head—what can they do with that ?—Have you heard any thing of George ? Have you sent Lersen to inquire after him ?

Elizabeth. Yes, my best-beloved.—Rouse yourself : you know not what favorable changes may yet happen.

Gortz. He whom God has struck to the earth, shall never raise himself again. I know best the weight that oppresses me. Adversity, I have before been accustomed to, and now, it is not Falkenheim alone, nor the peasants alone—nor the death of the Emperor—nor my wounds ;—but it is all combined.—My hour is come. I had hoped to have died as I have lived—but *this* will be done !

Elizabeth. Wilt thou not take some refreshment !

Gortz. No, my love.—See how bright the sun shines without there.

Elizabeth. 'Tis a beautiful spring day.

Gortz. Dear wife ! if thou couldst prevail upon the jailor;

jailor, to allow me to go into his little garden, for half an hour, that I might enjoy the bright sun, the clear heavens, and the pure air—

Elizabethb. I will fly to request it of him. I am sure he will not refuse.

THE GARDEN OF THE PRISON.

MARIA, LERSEN.

Maria. Go in, and see how he is. [*Exit Lersen*]

Elizabethb. (*Enters speaking to the jailor*) May God reward you for your love and indulgence to my Lord.—Ah Maria! What dost thou bring?

Maria. My brother's safety.—But my heart is torn with anguish. Falkenhelm is dead;—poisoned by his wife. My husband is in danger. The Princes are too powerful for him; they say he is blockaded and besieged.

Elizabethb. Do not believe the report—do not mention it to Gortz.

Maria. How is it with him?

Elizabethb. The hand of God lies heavy upon him. I feared he never would have survived thy return. And George is dead.

Maria. George, the precious boy!

Elizabethb. When those wretches set fire to Miltenberg, his master dispatched him to restrain their fury. A troop of the Imperialists surprised and fell upon them. George! had they all died in the same cause as thee, with pure, with blessed consciences, they might have met their God! many, many perished there; and George among them. He died a soldier's death.

Maria. Does Gortz know it?

Elizabethb. We conceal it from him. He asks me ten times a day if I have heard of him; and sends me continually to enquire after him. I fear to give his heart this last death-wound.

Maria.

Maria. Father in heaven! what are the hopes of this earth!—

Enter Gortz, Lersen, the Jailor.

Gortz. Almighty God! how calm and peaceful is it under thy heavens! How free!—The trees put forth their buds, and hope springs anew in every heart—Farewell my love—my branches are cut off—my strength sinks down into the grave.

Elizabeth. Shall I send Lersen for thy son from the monastery; that thou mayest once more see him, and bless him?

Gortz. No! leave him; he is better than I am: he needs not my blessing.—On our marriage-day, Elizabeth! I little imagined my life would have ended thus. My old father blessed us; and prayed that a progeny of noble brave sons might succeed us.—Thou hast not heard him, Oh God! I am the last of my race.—Lersen, the sight of thee rejoices me more in the hour of death than amid the rage of battle. There, my spirit led thine;—now it leans on thee for support, for comfort. Ah! could I but see George once more! once more catch animation from his glance.—You fix your eyes on the earth and weep?—He is dead! my George is dead!—Expire then, Gortz! Thou hast survived thyself; survived the noblest—How did he die?—Ah heaven! was he taken among those wretches? did he suffer as a rebel?

Elizabeth. No! he perished in the slaughter at Miltenberg: he fought like a lion for his liberty.

Gortz. God be praised!—He was the best youth under the sun; and the bravest.—Now let my soul depart!—Poor wife! I leave thee in a ruined world. Lersen, do not forsake her.—Shut your hearts as carefully as your doors. The times of dissimulation are arrived, and Liberty must bow the neck before it. The wicked shall govern with guile, and the upright shall fall into their nets.—Maria! Heaven restore thy husband to thee! May he never fall so deep, as he has
ascended

ascended high!—Selbitz is dead—and the good Emperor—and my George!—Give me a draught of water
 Heavenly air LIBERTY! Oh LIBERTY!

[He dies.]

Elizabeth. (Kneeling beside him, and with the most dignified enthusiasm) Ascend! Ascend great spirit!—The world was thy Prison!

THE END.

4 AP. 54

